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Mainstream

SATURDAY, JANUARY 3, 1970

13

CONGRES

Miles to go
from Bombay

Reac imurti

Discussion: Stalin's Reappraisal



KP 3878

the government
can afford
to ignore the urges
of the common people.

After all, democracy
has its basis
on those very urges
and if any government

flouts them
pushed aside
government
take it over

Nehru

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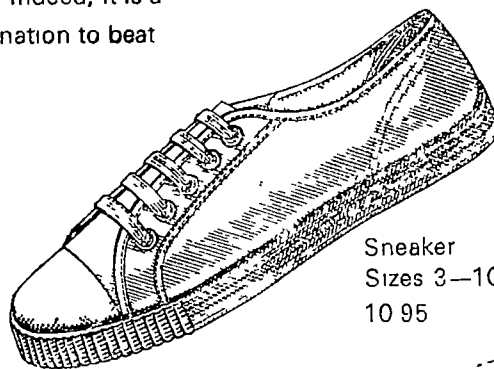
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tough combination to beat

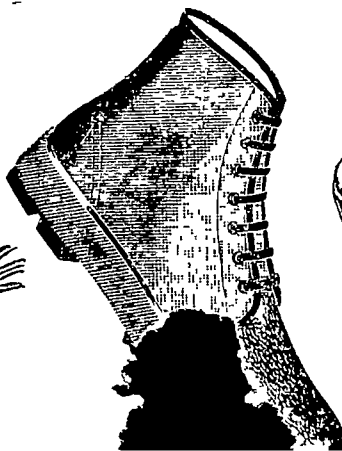


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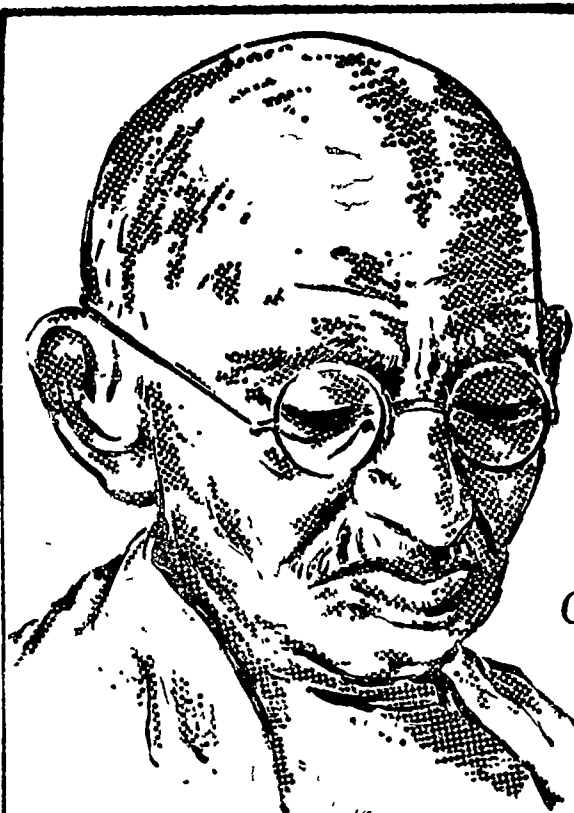
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*"The Germans are
a great and brave
people. Their industry,
their scholarship and
their bravery command
the admiration of the world.
One hopes that they will lead
the peace movement."*

—Mahatma Gandhi

"The German Democratic Republic, faithful
to the interests of the German people and
the international obligations of all Germans,

Reaction's Trimurti

THE seventies begin with a powerful challenge to the people who had seen in recent developments a new hope of advance towards fulfilment of their aspirations for a just social order

From three corners of India—Ahmedabad, Patna and Madras—the parties of the vested interests and communal reaction have issued warning of the biggest ever onslaught on the people and of a concerted bid to establish capitalist-fascist hegemony in the country

The Jana Sangh has warmly responded to the overtures from the Syndicate for joint efforts to dislodge the Indira Government and fight the progressive forces, if the Syndicate jettisoned the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi on protecting the interests of the religious minorities, particularly the Muslims, in order to make alliance with the RSS-guided Jana Sangh easier, the Sangh for its part combined its most vicious yet attack on the Muslim community with cleverly worded economic formulations in line with the status quo approach of Syndicate and Swatantra

Meeting in the presence of its nonagenarian founder, the Swatantra Party categorically declared itself in favour of a Right-wing combination made up of itself, the Syndicate Congress and the Jana Sangh. All the three have in addition made it plain that they also look to opportunists and unscrupulous elements in certain parties carrying Leftist labels for support not only in ousting the present Government at the Centre but in setting up a coalition government representing the forces of status quo

The three major parties of reaction, who dare not openly brush aside people's aspirations and spell out their sinister plans, naturally take recourse to falsehoods and mischievous propaganda the canard that removal of the right to property from the Fundamental Rights chapter of the Constitution will adversely affect the "common man", given currency more or less simultaneously by the three parties, is an example. It is not accidental that all of them are silent on the crucial question of acquisition of enormous property by a handful of families and its misuse to prevent steps towards a more equitable distribution of national wealth. Nor is it mere chance that on the questions of monopoly, concentration of ownership and the grip of big business over the national economy the Syndicate, Swatantra and Sangh are equally coy. The campaign of personal vilification of the Prime Minister being conducted by the leading lights of all the three parties is part of the effort to change the militant atmosphere in the country by Goebbelsian propaganda calculated to mislead and confuse the public.

The essence of the outcome of the meetings of all the three parties, which differ only in nomenclature, is to stall the advance of all sections of the population uniformly and to ensure the subservience of this great country to Western monopoly capital and to the imperialist arms particularly of America. The campaign of slander against the Communists is not new, but a new dimension has been added to it by describing even Congress members of long standing who vigorously demand the honest implementation of their party's pledges to the people over the years as Communists and fellow travellers hitherto these epithets were used selectively to deal with only influential individuals like Sri Krishna Menon and Sri Malaviya, but now every honest Congressman is made victim of strident MacCarthy-type baiting

The aim is obviously to create in the public mind the impression that to be a Communist is the worst possible sin any man can commit. This is not very different from the Jana Sangh's attempt to poison the Hindu mind against all Muslims in the country, numbering over a tenth of our population, by casting doubt on their patriotism and arrogating to the ruling coterie in the RSS and the Jana Sangh to lay down who is patriotic and who is not

If the ganging up of the three major reactionary parties is a sign of determination to crush popular

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EDITOR Nikhil Chakravartty

Views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and not necessarily of this journal

movements, prevent the realization of the people's aspirations and firmly establish the rule of upper caste Hindus and their allies, it is equally an indication that the vested interests realize the seriousness and magnitude of the challenge to their continued hegemony and exploitation of the common people. They see clearly enough that the poverty-stricken masses of India are no longer in a mood to resign themselves to an eternally inferior status, and the ganging up is their answer: together they have declared war on the people, and the seventies will thus necessarily have to be a decade of struggle.

The people can succeed and destroy their enemies only if they firmly refuse to be misled by false propaganda and false slogans. To make the people in all parts of the country aware of the true character and dark aims of the three reactionary parties and their allies elsewhere is thus the biggest task facing the progressive parties and the enlightened intellectuals in India.

Despite some of the disappointing features of the resolutions adopted by the Congress at Bombay, the session itself has clearly demonstrated that the party rank and file ardently desire radical socio-economic changes within prescribed time-limits, so that the promised goal of a socialist society may not for ever remain only a distant dream. It is clear also that the Congress led by Smt Gandhi not only has a load of opportunists and self-seekers at the higher-levels but is yet to have a grass-roots organization which can forge the sanctions for the changes proposed to be brought about in the social and economic structure. Even to protect the right to live as citizens of the minorities, especially the much-maligned Muslim community, which Smt Gandhi and other leaders have given topmost priority, the party organization has to be strong at the lower levels.

Side by side with building up a nationwide cadre of dedicated and hard-working young men and women, the ruling party at the Centre has also to think earnestly in terms of close programme-based cooperation with other progressive parties in the country.

If the new leaders of the Congress allow themselves to be frightened by the new MacCarthyism which some unprincipled elements in the country are exploiting to gain political advantage, they will only succeed in taking the party back to where it was before Syndicate was challenged and thrown out. The Congress should have no hesitation in accepting support and cooperation from any quarter provided it is based on the implementation of a common programme in the interests of the poorer sections of the population.

On this score, Smt Gandhi's stand as explained at the concluding session of the Bombay Congress, deserves to be welcomed by all right-thinking people in the country.

The Leftist parties are not without their share of responsibility in meeting the challenge jointly thrown by the dark forces of reaction. They have to remember that if the triple axis of Syndicate, Swatantra and Sangh is today strong enough to forge a united front and seek to block national progress and even to undermine and destroy the nation's secular democratic basis, much of the blame is theirs. If they had not been engaged in quarrels among themselves but had instead devoted themselves to the task of organising a united front of all Leftist forces, the Right reactionaries including the communalists should have been on the run by now.

Unless they learn the bitter lessons of the sixties and make earnest endeavours to come together, the Limayes and the Raj Narams will continue to be able to throw the Left as a whole into disarray and confusion. If it is necessary for the Congress led by Smt Gandhi to shed Syndicate-inspired complexes, it is equally necessary for the two Communist Parties, the SSP, the PSP and others to discard the totally irrelevant anti-Congressism of the mid-sixties, and act in accordance with the new requirements of the emerging seventies. If all these progressive sections unite and resist the onslaught of the vested interests and communal reaction, secularism and democracy can be saved and socialism made a realizable goal, if they fail to do so, the millions of poor people in India will stand betrayed.

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Miles to go from Bombay

THE Bombay Congress session has established Smt Indira Gandhi's claim to lead the biggest political organisation in the country. For, with all the efforts of the Syndicate, there is little doubt that the gatherings at Azadnagar—of the delegates, the AICC members and of the crowd—were bigger than those at Gandhinagar the previous weekend. The controversy as to which side commands the majority in the Congress, is thus more or less settled, though it has to be admitted that the Syndicate can claim to be no mean force and can hardly be dismissed as a tiny minority, in organisational competence it has proved to be more effective than Smt Gandhi's Congress.

But the battle for inheritance is today only of academic interest, its significance has considerably gone down since out of the two get-togethers have emerged two distinct political parties with divergent outlooks and political lines. The Syndicate has frankly emerged as an avowedly Rightist party with the banner of anti-Communism. And Smt Gandhi has openly claimed that her party continued to be Left-of-Centre, and it has refused to take any anti-Communist posture. The Bombay session was conspicuous for the absence of diatribes against Communists, except for two minor performers from West Bengal.

In contrast, the guns were continuously trained upon the Jana Sangh. Smt Gandhi's speech at the open session was the strongest denunciation of the Jana Sangh heard for a very long time. The Bombay Congress made no bones about the fact that its targets are the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra. In the entire discussion on the Political Resolution, this line was unwaveringly

followed. Even when the question of prevailing violence came up, Sri Chavan and Sri Nanda were the only top leaders who wanted that the warning against Left extremists should also be included. However, Sri Chavan did not try to define the danger of Left extremism as to cover all militant activities of the Communists.

The theory of equidistance from both Communists and communalists which one was accustomed to find being glibly trotted out from the Congress platform in the past, was very much missing in the Bombay session, the top-priority attack was upon the Rightist danger posed by the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra. On this point, Sri Jagjivan Ram's Presidential Address was sharpest in attacking casteism: "Many of our erstwhile colleagues are afraid of the spectre of communism. The spectre of casteism is perhaps *more dangerous*, because it is a widely prevalent malady, inherent in our social order, in our attitudes, beliefs, behaviour."

On the score of secularism there is little doubt that the Bombay Congress marked a definite step forward. It categorically laid down in its Political Resolution the task of generating among the Muslims and other minorities "a sense of involvement in the political and administrative framework." In the massive Presidential procession, the active participation of a large number of Muslims and Harijans was the most significant feature. This positive achievement was in marked contrast to the farce of debate on communal harmony at the Syndicate Congress, where Sri Nijalingappa's friendly references to the Jana Sangh dispelled all doubts about the Syndicate's positive approach to communalists.

While friends and adversaries were thus clearly recognised at the Azadnagar Congress on the political sphere, the more elaborate discussions on the Economic Policy did not bring out a similar unanimity of approach.

A noticeable feature of the discussion on economic policy was the strong rank-and-file feelings against Big Business tycoons. When Sri Chavan attacked the "super-princes" of Big Money, he got the biggest applause.

The speeches of the leaders admitted quite a lot about their mistaken notions regarding the character of the so-called mixed economy. Sri Jagjivan Ram himself said "It is clear to me that the concept of mixed economy is becoming unfortunately very mixed and confused." While calling for the expansion of the public sector, he said the Government "must state in unmistakable terms that opportunities given to the private sector to serve the people, do not include the opportunity and freedom to sabotage the national objective."

Sri Chavan, while moving the Economic Policy Resolution, confessed that the commanding heights of the economy had come to be occupied by some monopoly houses. He stated that the private sector must play "a subservient role", and that even inside the private sector, the drawing power of the monopolies "must not be allowed to grow, and the Government's job should be to provide means, the credit and other facilities, to smaller entrepreneurs." "To think of the private sector has a place in our country does not mean that some few capitalist empires should have dominant power over the nation's economy."

In this context, the expectations of a large number of

delegates was that Economic Policy Resolution should make strident assertions of the party's determination to fight Big Business. On the contrary, the Congress leadership changed the very character of the resolution. Instead of a catalogue of objectives, the new style Economic Policy Resolution confined itself almost entirely to what the Government specifically could do in the next year and a half, that is up to 1970-71. It tried to avoid the chronic Congress ailment of making resolutions with high-sounding promises while the Government took little notice of those resolutions in its day-to-day activities. The difference this time lies in having a resolution with modest targets but drafted in all seriousness as the party's mandate to the Government.

Concretely, on the industrial sector, the Economic Policy Resolution wanted both licensing and financial policies should be so changed as to provide facilities for new entrepreneurs and to prevent the evils of concentration of economic power and growth of monopolies. It wanted that the role and scope of the public sector should be enlarged. The details of this policy directive were spelt out neither in the Resolution itself nor in the key speeches.

Secondly, many of the specific recommendations of the Economic Policy Panel were not touched in the Resolution. For instance, many delegates were left wondering about the difficulties for implementing such proposals as the revision of the Monopolies Bill and the plea for the public sector taking over the management wherever the public-sector financial institutions jointly hold the largest bloc of equity shares.

There were adverse comments why the Panel recommendations regarding financial institutions were not incorporated in the Economic Policy Resolution which only stated that "certain reforms of public financial institutions are essential both in the realm of the policies pursued by these institutions and in respect of their management." Similarly, many wondered why the Government in the near future could not

promise that the Industrial Policy Resolution would be revised to put a ban on the entry of foreign capital in the consumer goods industries.

Disappointment was felt also with regard to the question of fighting black money and tax-evasion. The Economic Policy Resolution's directive that the Government should appoint an "expert group" to examine and suggest legal and administrative measures was considered vague by many who were cynical about the outcome of the labours of such expert groups.

While the Resolution called for early enforcement of a ceiling on urban property, Sri Chavan and Smt Gandhi tended to emphasise the complications accompanying such a step. This gave rise to misgivings if the Government could be earnest about its implementation in the near future, particularly when it is known that powerful interests are dead set against it.

Another item for immediate implementation was with regard to nationalisation of imports. Originally, the nationalisation of the entire import trade was the demand. Sri Jagjivan Ram in his printed Presidential Address was categorical: "To begin with, import trade should be straight-away nationalised." In the draft Resolution, it was changed to nationalisation of import of raw material. Then Foreign Trade Minister, Sri Bhagat, changed it further to cover "the bulk of import trade." It appeared that the Government would prefer to avoid a confrontation with giant foreign oil companies which import a lot of crude oil into the country. Sri Bhagat's amendment would provide the loophole by which the foreign-imported crude oil need not be touched.

While the programme to combat employment was marked out in the Resolution as having "the highest national priority", Smt Gandhi said that the measures enumerated would require a year and half to complete. If this were possible, it would no doubt be a positive achievement, although the ever-expanding problem of unemployment could hardly be expected to be rooted

out under the present social set-up.

The section on Land Reforms has the merit of directing the enforcement of all existing land reforms by 1970-71, the abolition of all remaining intermediaries by the end of this year, while the steps proposed for settlement on Government waste land and distribution of land under Benami ownership fitted in with the objectives of the current mass kisan campaign under the United Front Ministry in West Bengal.

However, this positive aspect of the Economic Policy Resolution gave one the impression that the measures suggested were meant to come from the top, that is, as administrative directives, while experience has clearly shown that no land reforms could be effective unless and until they were enforced through mass peasant action. Neither the Economic Policy Resolution nor the keynote speeches touched on this point at all.

There were repeated warnings about the explosive social tension in the countryside as a result of the widening disparities with the phenomenal growth of kulak economy. Sri Jagjivan Ram referring to the breakthrough in agriculture, warned that "the beneficiaries are not those who are living on a pittance of a few rupees a month but the privileged minority of substantial and middle cultivators." However, the dilemma which faces the Congress leadership is that it is not in a position to touch the rich peasant who is its political prop in the countryside. The conference of Chief Ministers called at the end of November to discuss land reforms revealed how some of the enlightened Chief Ministers were not prepared to curb the growing power and wealth of the kulak. It was no accident that the Economic Policy Resolution could not take up the question of agricultural income-tax.

The strategy that the Congress leadership has therefore worked out for the agrarian sector can provide only fringe benefits to the small cultivator and the village poor. The Bombay Congress

session saw repeated promises of liberal credit facilities for these sections—including the landless—through the agency of nationalised banks. On this point, an important advance was made in the basis for credit “from credit-worthiness of persons to credit-worthiness of activities”, that is, in place of property, the produce of labour could be the basis of credit.

There are other items in the Economic Policy Resolution which though seemingly unimportant, have important bearing on the lives of the people, these include proposals for urban improvement, slum clearance; provisions for drinking water in every village by the end of the Fourth Plan house sites for the village-poor, and basic drugs at reasonable price, the project for children's welfare providing nutritious meals for children up to five would be taken on a limited scale, as the entire project is to cost over Rs 350 crores a year.

The economic programme is meant to be completed in roughly two years. There was however a strong impression that the Government did not indicate how it was going to raise resources to meet this welfare programme. The mood of the Congress ranks at the Bombay session was definitely in favour of making the rich pay for such a programme. However, the Government leaders did not pursue that line, on the ground that all these would require “careful thinking”. Outside observers could not help returning with the feeling that after the houl over bank nationalisation, some of Smt Gandhi's important lieutenants would not like to face a hostile opposition from the leaders of Big Money. The anxiety throughout has been to go in for as many measures as possible which would not immediately bring the Government into hostile confrontation with the leaders of Big Business.

Another dilemma likely to be faced by the Congress leadership is that while it has insisted in Bombay on a time-bound modest economic programme, it has not yet overhauled the party organisational machinery for the job to

get the programme implemented. By tradition, the Congress party organisation is largely propagandist. Despite all the talk of constructive work, there is little that is done by the Congress organisation at the grass roots, to act as the instrument of social change. The new economic programme envisages large-scale mass movement to help in the task of implementing the measures particularly in the rural sector. In the absence of such a mass movement, many of the benefits will not reach those for whom these are meant.

In this respect, Smt Indira Gandhi and her colleagues have gone in for a very big challenge. The phenomenal popularity that she enjoys today could be sustained only if the promises made at Bombay were kept within the brief span of two years. On this score, the Bombay session gave very little by way of concrete guidance to the thousands who turned up from different corners of the country. Except for the setting up of *ad-hoc* committees wherever the Syndicate is strong, there was practically no discussion about the need for a new type of party organisation to serve the new politics. It is clear that the traditional Congress functioning can neither help to implement the new programme, nor can it help to generate mass enthusiasm for it.

One of the achievements of the Congress which was rather shabbily treated in the Bombay session was a Resolution on Science and Technology. It is a comprehensive document covering various problems from encouraging indigenous know-how to prevent Brain Drain. The document could very well serve as the national guideline in the field of education, science and industry.

Equally noteworthy was the Congress President's printed address which contained some very weighty observations. Its approach to the question of administrative personnel is extremely relevant today: “Neutrality of the services, in a country where social disparities are extremely glaring and where the privileged classes control all the levers of power, invariably

operates to the advantage of the privileged and the disadvantage of the have-notes.” Referring to the inequity in the rural life, Sri Jagjivan Ram in his address said: “The governmental machinery reflecting the casts and class structure in the village, plays a supporting, if not a subservient role in perpetuating the existing order.” And he was correct in demanding that what is needed is “clearly and inevitably, an apparatus with a purpose, a mind. We need a service committed to the ideal of democracy, socialism and secularism.”

Drawing upon the eventful history of the Congress, Sri Jagjivan Ram tried to show that the amorphous character of the Congress “constituted alike, both its strength and weakness”. His warning theme was that “the Congress has reached a stage when it must pursue radical policies of disintegrate.”

This was the running thread of the entire Bombay session. The Congress ranks seem to be prepared to go in for radical policies in many directions. The immediate economic programme can satisfy them if it really is—as claimed it to be—an economic budget for the next eighteen to twenty months. If, on the other hand, this modest programme is left as the only dose of palliatives, that will neither solve any of the besetting problems of Indian economy nor help to retain for Smt Gandhi the mass popularity she has been reaping since the bank nationalisation and the break with the Syndicate beginning with the ouster of Sri Morarji Desai from the Government.

The balance-sheet of Bombay can thus hardly be drawn up until the first fruits of the decisions taken reach the masses. The journey undertaken by Smt Gandhi and her supporters is an arduous one. They have miles to go and the road is not strewn with roses.

Meanwhile, the millions all over the country will impatiently wait for her to keep the promises made at Azadnagar, as the nation rings out the old decade and rings in the new.

N.C.

December 30

FINDINGS OF A SURVEY RESEARCH

UP: Shifting Alliances

ARZOO RAIPURI

THE question on everybody's lips—be an elite or illiterate—all over UP is: Will Gupta Government go or survive? Will Chaudhri Charan Singh come back? Or, is there going to be a deadlock, followed by a Presidential takeover after February 11, the date set for Vidhan Sabha, if Sri Gupta is voted out?

The question is being answered by all and sundry, according to their own lights and predilections. Here was an opportunity for a sociologist to make an objective analysis of the political situation, and conduct research and an opinion survey.

It must be stated, at the outset, that the procedure of quota sampling was adopted in the present survey, drawn from various political and social cross-sections of the legislators and the public. This has its limitations, yet it is far more reliable than any individual's intuitional appraisal.

We can analyse our findings at two levels, based on: (i) an objective quantification of changing political alignments of the MLAs—Vidhan Sabha members; and (ii) the functional part played by propaganda and rumours, and its interaction on public opinion.

The last five tumultuous weeks, the day nine Ministers of the Gupta Cabinet resigned, and the date which coincided with the requisitioned AICC session in Delhi and the Gupta faction's Congress Convention in Lucknow, followed by a snap addition of 29 Ministers on November 23, from November 23 to December 26, the date of our

reporting, have witnessed the vicissitudes in fortunes of the two rivals in the race for power.

The objective situation in terms of the support enjoyed on two crucial dates by the rival groups in the Vidhan Sabha is summed up in Table I

TABLE I
CHANGING POLITICAL ALIGNMENTS IN UP

porters	Gupta Government		Opposition (Topplers)		Uncommitted	
	Nov 23	Dec 26	As on Nov 23	Dec 26	Nov 23	Dec 26
Congress						
(a) Gupta Group	136	116 (—20)	—	—	—	1**
(b) PM's Group	—	—	80	100(+20)	—	—
BKD	2	1	—	95*	97	—
Jana Sangh	1	40	—	5	45	—
SSP	—	21	—	12	32	1**
Swatantra	—	5	—	—	5	—
CPI	—	—	4	4	—	—
CPI(M)	—	—	1	1	—	—
PSP	—	2	—	1	3	—
Republican	—	—	—	1	1	—
KMP	—	—	—	1	1	—
Independents	—	12	—	6	18	—
Total	139	197(+48)	85	226(+151)	202	—

*A recent judgment has declared invalid the election of one BKD candidate. Hence the loss of one in the present strength of the Vidhan Sabha and the BKD

** Speaker and Deputy Speaker respectively.

Table I records the rise and fall in the strength of rival groups over a period of five fateful weeks. The figures given have been cross-checked and corrected up to date with various groups, and may be said to be fairly reliable.

On the crucial date of November 23, the Gupta group commanded an overwhelming majority in the Congress party and was successful in mobilizing 136 Congress members in Lucknow as against 80 by the Tripathi group

in Delhi. On that day, it was obvious, though Sri Gupta lost his overall majority, he was far ahead of his rivals. The Congress support to Sri Gupta dropped from 216 to 136, but the Tripathi group could not muster more than 85 on that day, which included five Communist MLAs.

This was followed by four weeks of unprincipled horse-trading on either side, which continues even today. On the part of the Gupta group, this once finally culminated in enlistment of conditional programme—bound support from the Jana Sangh and the SSP, who together totalled 77. Thus, Sri Gupta virtually made up the net loss of 80 that he had suffered. And it appeared, he was going to stay, and there was

little threat to his position vis-à-vis Smt Indira Gandhi's group.

Once open support of the BKD leader to Smt Gandhi's group was announced on December 9, split in the SSP and defections in the Jana Sangh made their appearance, and numerous other small groups that were uncommitted till then, started veering round either the new alliance, or towards Sri Gupta. The latter were, of course, very small in number, but acquired significance

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in the current rat-race where each single member mattered

The new entrants to Smt Gandhi's alliance were, 12 SSP; one lone PSP, one lone Republican, one lone KMP, and six Independents, thus adding another 21. There were 18 uncommitted Independents on November 23. Sri Gupta succeeded in weaning away a majority of 12 from this group by the fourth week.

In the third week of the crisis, events took an unexpected turn. On December 9, Smt Gandhi's group, thanks to the fresh and frantic conciliatory overtures initiated by her, succeeded in lining up the 97-member BKD group to its side.

Soon after, the SSP group of 32 was divided into two on the issue of support to the Gupta Government—about 20 members under the thumb of Sri Raj Narain supported the Gupta group, and the remaining 12, under the influence of Sri S.M. Joshi, sided with Smt Gandhi's alliance.

Just on the eve of December 13, another shock to the Gupta faction was administered by a section of the Jana Sangh, led by Sri Ganga Bhakt Singh and Raja of Jaunpur, who publicly criticised and threatened Sri Gupta over his dithering on the programmatic commitments already made to their party.

Though, on the whole, the Jana Sangh, as a party, is presently committed to extend programme-bound support to the Gupta Ministry, five of its new members have now clandestinely promised their support to Sri Charan Singh.

Thus, Sri Gupta, who originally was in a minority of 139, added 48 and touched 197, still lags behind the opposition alliance. On the other hand, Smt Gandhi's group which started with a minority of 85, has gradually swelled into a majority of about 226, by making staggering additions.

It will be clear from the foregoing developments that, whereas a majority of MLA's, that is, 202 (excluding the two Congress groups) were uncommitted on November 23, they later started hobnobbing and negotiating with

both the rivals. From this block, Sri Gupta got just 48, while his rivals got the lion's share of 151.

The foregoing review of events belies the popular notion that, with the passage of time, Sri Gupta will succeed in transforming factoring his minority into a majority, and that if the Assembly, is not immediately called, and not before February 11, 1970, the Gupta group will mysteriously inflate its strength, and will be in a position to face the legislature. The apprehension is far from facts.

It must be conceded that Sri Gupta has fought against heavy odds; though once it looked that he virtually retrieved his position by enlisting the support of the Jana Sangh and the SSP, and thus outwitted and thoroughly demoralized Smt Gandhi's supporters. There are, however, limits to Sri Gupta's resourcefulness.

But for the timely intervention and aid of Smt Gandhi, the Tripathi-Bahuguna group was nervous and on the verge of collapse. The rapprochement with the BKD chief, which was followed by a frontal attack on the Gupta Government, and public opinion; and the rumours, such as, the reported recall of the UP Governor, leading to ultimate dismissal of the Gupta Ministry, all these factors combined and contributed to convert Smt Gandhi's small minority into a threatening majority.

And the tide has now definitely turned in favour of Smt Gandhi's group, for which no credit is due to Sri Tripathi or Sri Bahuguna, both of whom proved their incapacity and impotence. It was belated declaration of support by the BKD Chief which infused life and hope into the otherwise listless PM's group.

It is thus, clearly revealed that the Gupta group once successfully replenished itself, it almost succeeded, but finally failed, it rose from 139 to 215 at one time. In the first fateful week, the Smt Gandhi's group started with mere 85, in the second, it tottered, in the third, it recovered; in the fourth, it moved forward and has now touched 226 finally, in the fifth, it is a problem to keep its heterogeneous flock together.

The present position is characterised by a spate of press conferences and statements by the spokesmen of Smt Gandhi's group—Sri Tripathi, Sri Bahuguna and Sri Chaturbhuj Sharma, the recent reports of the Ahmedabad session of the Congress (O), the covert moves in Smt Gandhi's camp to see that Sri Charan Singh, the BKD chief, does not get the fruit of the Chief Ministership; the lukewarm and reticent attitude of Sri Charan Singh, and finally, the volley of radical postures and the keenness of Sri Gupta to issue instalments of ordinances to establish credibility and improve his poor image.

In this background, it is feared that his popular measures may take the wind out of the sails of the allies of Smt Gandhi's camp. On the floor of the house, it would be difficult for them to oppose these measures which they themselves had once advocated. This is the major predicament of the progressives in Smt Gandhi's camp. This may also give the needed respite to Sri Gupta, and he may even now succeed in bringing back those 20 MLAs who were initially with him on November 23. This may upset the Opposition apple-cart.

The time factor, instead of going in favour of the Gupta

(Continued on page 34)

TABLE II
RELATIVE STRENGTH OF VARIOUS GROUPS

Groups	Strength as on	
	November 23	December 26
Gupta Government	139	197
Topplers	85	226
Uncommitted	202	2*
Total	426	425

*They are the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker who resigned from their parties after being elected to these offices.

Nagaland : Its Place in India

S. K. CHOUBE

MODERN history of Nagaland can well be divided into the British period, marked by an increasing administrative control over a pre-political if not a pre-social population, and the post-British period marked by a gradual constitutional identification with the rest of India.

In the recorded history, the first contact of the Nagas with the Brahmaputra Valley took place in the 13th century during the Ahom invasion across the Patkoi range. The first British contact with the Nagas can be traced to the first Anglo-Burmese War, when Captain Neufville crossed the Patkoi range of mountains, in pursuit of the Burmese, and freed about 6,000 Naga slaves of the Singphos.

The early opinion, according to Mackenzie, was that "these Nagas were themselves most peaceably inclined, and that if any of our villagers were attacked by them, it was only in mistaken retaliation for wrongs done to the Naga tribes by Singphos either of Assam or (of) Burma".

Hesitant Activism

The bigger Naga concentrations were further west. Early in the 1830's, the British noted tensions on the borders of the Naga country with Assam, Cachar and Manipur, all of which had been exercising some type of controlling influence on parts of the Naga hills. Yet, it was only after the death of the cautiously activist British Agent, David Scott, was there a decision to intervene in the Naga Hills.

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Besides the rival claims on land, the eastern Nagas had a special complaint against Assam. The Ahom kings had claimed the ownership of the brine-springs on the fringe of the hills and were extracting royalties from the Semas who had specialised in salt-making and traded in it. In 1841, the British won their friendship by abolishing the salt-duty. In 1842, Captain Brodie's tour of these hills was a success.

British Inroads

In 1832, Captains Jenkins and Pemberton, with a contingent of 700 Manipuri troops and 800 coolies, marched through the Kucheha and Angami Naga territories. In the next winter the Manipur Raja and Lt Gordon followed the same track with the Manipur Levy. Upon Jenkin's recommendation by a treaty in 1834, Manipur was given the charge of controlling the western Nagas and, in 1835, the forest between the Doyang and the Dhansiri rivers was declared as the border between Manipur and Assam.

As Manipur failed in its task enforcing peace, a Sub-Assistant at Nowgong, Mr Grange, was sent with an expedition in 1839 to the Angami area, where he discovered a rich slave-trade between the Angamis and the Bengalee traders.

The 1841 expedition of Lt Briggs into the Angami area resulted in "friendly agreements with most of the leading communities", mainly on the fixation of the Dhansiri as the border between the British districts and the Angami land. The boundary between Manipur and the Naga

area was agreed upon the next year, but was not finally settled until 1877.

In 1843, some of the Angami chiefs came down to Nowgong and agreed to obey the Government, pay a yearly tribute and abstain from internecine wars. In 1844, however, they defied the Government. Between 1844 and 1845, Captains Brodie and Butler each led two expeditions into the Naga hills indicating a spurt in the "activist" policy.

A major flare-up in 1849 made the Government fall back upon a policy of non-interference. By 1851, ten military "promenades"—a term used to denote the pacification-raids—were led into the Angami area. It was, therefore, "decided to try the combined effect of non-interference in their internal quarrels, of encouraging trade when they behaved well, and of shutting them out from the neighbouring markets when they gave trouble".

In 1866, at the instance of Cecil Beadon, Lt Governor of Bengal, a policy of slow but positive control was adopted and an outpost was opened at Shamuguting (near Nichuguard). Finally, in 1877, a "forward policy" was decided upon and in 1878 two outposts were opened at Kohima and Wokha—to check Angami raids on Nowgong and to 'dominate the Lhota country to the east of the Dikhu' respectively, abandoning Shamuguting.

In 1882 the Naga Hills District was formed, chiefly with the Angami and Lhota areas. The expansion of the "administered" district went on at least till 1927, when the "Melomi-Drimi" area was annexed.

Pre-state Society

An interesting feature of the Naga social life was the complete absence of the awareness of any state-form, in spite of the people being surrounded by powerful and organised states, possibly due to the mobile nature of their living. The only terrace-cultivators among the Nagas, the Angamis, were so intensely freedom-loving, that no sense of

(Continued on page 35)

MAINSTREAM

Maulana Maudoodi and Socialism

MOIN SHAKIR

THE study of the similarities and the distinctions between Islam and socialism is no easy job. The orthodox theological school considers socialism as the anti-thesis of Islam, while the liberal school has evolved what is labelled as the Islamic socialism. The scholars, therefore, generally arrive at wrong conclusions.

Baljon, dealing with the ideas of the religious Muslim writers, says, "However vague, sketchy and incongruous the political theories may be, there exists an unmistakable consensus of opinion regarding the inadmissibility of communist ideology." A.K. Sen holds that "Islam will usher communism, sooner or later". The fact is that obnoxious orthodoxy is thoroughly hostile to socialist theory and practice.

Islamic Socialism

The liberals talk of Islamic socialism. They hold that "Islamic ideology in its fundamentals is broad enough to embrace within its framework all genuinely progressive movements. Islam started as a theistic socialist republic with liberty, fraternity and equality. It contains the seeds of healthy socialism". (K. A. Hakim, *Islam and Communism*, p. 123)

The Islamic socialism, according to K. A. Hakim, allows "freedom of initiative with collective planning". It combines "individual liberty with social welfare. In that there is a background of spiritual values" (*Ibid* p. 152).

The Islamic socialism should be viewed as the counterpart of "Christian socialism". It is presented as the means of deliverance from all social evils. It

also looks for a "third line", differing from both capitalism and communism and yet "does not go beyond the bounds of bourgeois social relations". It is closely connected with reformism.

In this sense the ideology of Islamic socialism is different from orthodox theological school. But what is significant is that both liberal and orthodox schools "believe in Islam as offering a satisfactory code of life and a soul satisfying explanation of existence".

Perfect System

Maulana Maudoodi, the founder of the Jamaat-e-Islami, is consistently and forcefully advocating the rejection of the anti-Islamic ideology of socialism. His anti-socialist attitude stems from his stubborn hostility to the West and the faith in Islam as a panacea of all political and economic evils.

Maudoodi regards Islam as a perfect system of life, as he believes, it is divinely ordained. Other religions and systems of life are imperfect. Islam is "the only true way of life or correct attitude of thought and action" (*True conduct of life*, p. 2). It comprehends "the whole of life, the entire society and all peoples of all nations and ages." (p. 3)

This is very explicitly claimed by the Quran. Islam does not preclude culture and statecraft. According to Maudoodi, "What humanity needs, and needs direly, is such a system which is based on a true knowledge of man and all facts related to him, and on universal, abiding and eternal principles".

Islam is the only true way of

life for man, for "it alone conforms to the essence of reality". It is right because only God has the true knowledge of all reality and He alone can guide infallibly. "Without Islam justice is not possible. Other than this, whichever course man may adopt, it would inevitably lead to inequity. Islam not only determines the relations between man and God but also between man and man."

As regards the Western influences, Maudoodi says that they have led to the degeneration and de-Islamization of the Muslim mind. The Western civilization has forcibly divorced religion from society and created a slavish mentality among the subject people and has castrated their will and ability to resist. He maintains that Western education has done permanent harm to the Muslim mind and culture by spreading rationalism, irreligion and atheism (*Tanqihat*, p. 128).

The impact of the West has made the Muslims ignorant of the vitality and virility of Islamic culture. To him, Islam is opposed to all values which have captivated the Western mind. The Western values are disruptive in social life, and the stability of the family is rudely shaken by the equality of sexes.

In the political sphere, the West has created false gods as nationalism, democracy and socialism. Religion has been alienated from the state which is no more an instrument for the promotion of moral life of man.

The cultural values of the West are dominated by the Epicurean attitudes which are incapable of satisfying the demands of the human spirit. The Muslim mind is corrupted by the West through the institutions of the colleges and the universities which are Maudoodi feels, "dignified slaughterhouses".

According to Maudoodi, socialism is also one of the evil products of the Western civilization. He says that socialism is the result of the inherent weakness and the contradictions of the capitalist society. He admits that the socialist movement has gathered momentum and popularity, and constitutes a threat to the very existence and survival

of Islam. He, however, is impressed by the spirit of dedication and sacrifice of the followers of socialism.

He holds that the Communist movement cherishes high ideals and aims at establishing a society where there will be no injustice, no exploitation and no inequality. But this is a pious thinking on the part of the Socialists. The object cannot be crystallised by the Socialists. Islam alone will create such a society which will be superior to socialism.

Like Ikhawan, his attitude vis-a-vis socialism is that if the Communists preach their principles, Islamic answer will be "so be it." Our principles do more than include yours. You cannot boast of a principle we cannot match or excel."

Maudoodi discounts struggle as an important determining factor in the development of history. To him, the economic interpretation of history is alien to Islam. Islam does not want to abolish the class of haves and have-nots. He is not much concerned with the evils of the class society. He does not believe in the institutions—social, political, economic—as the creation of a particular stage of economic development.

Class Society

Although he would agree that the motive of the Prophet was sometimes conditioned by political expediency, he is not prepared to accept that the economic institutions established by the Prophet would not serve economic justice for all time to come. History shows that the economic institutions of Islam like *Zakat* found in monopolistic capitalism a stubborn adversary to contend with.

Regarding the institution of private property, Maudoodi says that Quran is not silent on this question. It has sanctioned the old Zamindari system. When Maulana Aslam Janapuri, argued that Islam did not favour private property on the basis of the Quran (*Val Arza wazha Al Islam*) Maudoodi explained that the intention of the Quran was not to abolish all private property, as this Quranic verse

contained just a vague hint on the subject and did not ordain a revolutionary change in the social order.

Moreover, the Prophet himself, Maudoodi maintained, did not abolish private property. He also argued that the verse (*Lakumna fil Arza Jamia*) of the Quran (which means that property should be held in common) did not impose a sanction on the extent of the property of the individual.

Private Property

Maudoodi holds that "land to the tillers" is a dangerous slogan because Islam does not fix the limit of small or big land-ownership. He, therefore, does not favour any movement for the extension of economic equality. Common economic interest and equality, according to him, is a product of human selfishness.

Maudoodi's argument for the abolition of usury in the modern context is far from clear. For full-fledged industrial development, either the present banking system will have to be continued or all means of production will have to be nationalized. Maudoodi has not considered these alternatives seriously or expressed a preference for either.

It is rightly observed that his economic policies, in view of his opposition to capitalism as well as socialism, will lead to pre-capitalist zamindari system.

Maudoodi's concept of Islam is out and out medieval. It is characterized by the feudal spirit. His political and economic approach is in conformity with the irrelevant aspects of Islam. His description of Western civilization is far from correct. He has no consideration for the spirit of liberty, recognition of the rights, dedication to national and collective goods, spirit of acquisitiveness, science and philosophy which are the elements of the West.

He fails to appreciate the attempt to apply rational methods for solving the problems of the society with the emphasis on "man against system, believing that man formulates system to serve his needs"

Maudoodi's criticism flows from his biased attitude towards Western thought. To him, socialism is the enemy of spiritualism. It is "the philosophy of bread and butter". Maudoodi betrays the absence of a sound knowledge of social sciences.

His understanding of socialism is obviously superficial. To say that socialism does not accept the reality of mind or spirit is not correct. "Materialism does not deny the reality of mind. What materialism does deny is that a thing called 'the mind' exists separate from the body. The mind is not a thing, or a substance, distinct from the body" (Maurice Cornforth, *Dialectical Materialism*; Vol III, p. 13).

Economic factor alone determines history is not a Socialist assertion. Engels says, "The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure—political forms of the class struggle and its results, to art constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc., juridical brains of the participants, political, juristic, philosophical theories, religious views and their further development into systems of dogmas—also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form. There is an interaction of all these elements." (Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondance*, p. 498).

Exploiter's Tool

From this we can infer that socialism is not opposed to the moral teachings of religion but to that religion or the religious institutions which have become or serve as tools in the hands of the exploiting classes.

Maudoodi's writings on socialism are full of inconsistencies. In the pre-independence days, he supported the inhuman zamindari system on the basis of the Quran and the Shariat. In 1956, to win over the common people, he opposed that system, again, on the basis of the Quran and the Shariat. A careful study of Maudoodi's ideas reveals that he is guided more by political

opportunism than Islam. Islam, in fact, is a tool in his hands to further his political ambitions.

His opposition to the freedom struggle can be instanced here. He has been the mainstay of reaction. In 1936, he asked the British people to choose between Communism and Islam, they should not oppose Islam because the Indian Muslim was no longer an Anglophile of 1910, but was considerably changed and inclined towards Communism. The growth of Communism would be dangerous to the survival of the British Raj. The only factor which could contain its growth was Islam.

Thus, Maudoodi's Islamic politics has been dominated by "the sinister design of hiding the economic realities of life".

To Maudoodi, history is of the least importance as Islam transcends time and place. While criticising certain aspects of socialism, he frequently cites examples from the Russian practice. But when one criticises Islam from historical standpoint, he disagrees emphatically and says

it was the fault of the rulers or the people and not of Islam.

Convinced of the so-called purity and the supremacy of Islam, he advocates that socialism is "an alien ideology. And those who believe in it should be debarred from contesting elections or indulging in political activity."

Inconsistent Attitude

To conclude, the prevailing Muslim intellectual attitudes are inconsistent with Socialist theory. The small radical group can appreciate and accept socialism. This group is generally ignored. It feels that Islam should be free from the "fetters of authority" and the chains of medievalism.

The radicals conceive Islam apart from a social, political and economic system. They do not consider history as displaying the decadence of faith but that embodies the stages of development of human thought to which faith cannot remain indifferent. Only such an attitude regarding religion and history will be conducive to the growth of scientific socialism.

and she might lead the country to the Communist camp. He exhorted the Swayamsevaks to defend the motherland. The enemies should be eliminated and for this the Swayamsevaks should be well equipped to fight for the honour of the "Hindu Rashtra".

The Guruji was surprised, pained and angry with the reports from the various States about the organisational condition of the RSS. Its Delhi unit came in for severe criticism. The Guruji was annoyed with the "poor" performance of the Delhi RSS even though the Jana Sangh had a majority in the Delhi Municipal Corporation and the Metropolitan Council.

In the fourth General Elections, when the Jana Sangh rode to power at the crest of mass discontent against the Congress misrule, the RSS had some 10,000 Swayamsevaks in Delhi, who actively participated in 600 "sakhas" spread all over the capital. It was well organised with cadre adequately trained. This figure rose sharply subsequently, making a total of 15,000.

Then came the decline. In mid-1969, the RSS suffered tremendously, the hard core of 10,000 trained Swayamsevaks dwindled to 5,600, and the number of sakhas was reduced to 425 only. The sanchalaks attributed this fall to the recent order of the Home Ministry banning the participation of Government employees in the RSS organised sakhas.

The sanchalaks devised a new technique to circumvent the Government order. Overnight many "Bhajan Mandalis", "Devi Jagarans", "Vichar Gosthi" clubs were organised to keep the Government servants within the fold. "Vichar Gosthis", "Jagarans" were organised by the RSS activists and were presided over or addressed by the Chief Executive Councillor, Sri Vijay Kumar Malhotra, and other Jana Sangh luminaries.

On the occasion of "Guru Parva" this year, when the loyal disciples contributed their "mite" as "Guru Dakshina", the collection reached a "poor" total of Rs 5,32,000, far short of the last

RSS in Northern India

EKALAVYA

THE militant wing of the Jana Sangh, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), has lately been facing a decline in the northern zone. The northern zone of the RSS consists of Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh.

The decline has been quite serious. Recently, "Pramukh Sanchalaks" from all these States were summoned to Delhi for a discussion by the high priest of the RSS, Sri M S Golwalkar, in the so-called Sanskriti Mandir at Jhandewalan, New Delhi.

Sri Golwalkar discussed the

various problems with his faithfuls, specially the situation arising in the country after the Congress in-fighting and the subsequent emergence of two distinct Congress parties. The discussion, it appears, was simply a monologue. According to the Guruji, the gap thus created, should be filled in, and the opportunity utilised for the advancement of the ideology of "Hindu Rashtra". The Swayamsevaks should be ready to make the supreme sacrifice.

He strongly criticised the Prime Minister and dubbed her a Communist. The Guruji said that power had gone to her head

year's figure of Rs 10 lakhs. This included fat donations from the Delhi traders "Guru Parva" is the most sacred occasion for the RSS when every Swayamsevak is required to pay his homage in front of the portrait of the "Guru" kept under an overhanging saffron flag of the "Hindu Rashtra"

Guru Golwalkar - considered it a serious failing and warned the Delhi traders. The performance of the party in Delhi was severely criticised by some of the participants owing allegiance to Sri Balraj Madhok, MP, and some time back the undisputed leader of the Delhi Jana Sangh. They found the occasion opportune to give voice to their anger against Sri Kedar Nath Sahni and other Delhi Jana Sangh leaders. They had not forgotten the role of these leaders during the Vajpayee-Madhok controversy in the All-India Jana Sangh. At that time Sri Sahni deserted Sri Madhok's camp despite earlier assurances of full support.

Sri Sahni is the most powerful leader in the Municipal Corporation and is also called the "iron man" of Delhi. He is the most trusted lieutenant of the Gurujī.

In this meeting, he along with Mayor Hansraj Gupta, assured the Gurujī that they would strengthen the RSS in Delhi. But the Gurujī was not satisfied, he gave some guidelines for a phased programme to rebuild the organisation. Some changes are in the offing in the Delhi RSS very soon.

Uttar Pradesh came next. The Lucknow Mela (RSS camp) was not to the liking of the Gurujī. He expected a bigger gathering than about 5,000 assembled. He was critical of the performance of the RSS in western UP.

After the mid-term poll in UP, the RSS has suffered a set back in the western districts Dehradun, Saharanpur, Muzaffarnagar, Meerut, Bulandshahr, Bijnore, Moradabad, Najibabad, Sahajahanpur, Bareilly and Nainital districts now have hardly 10,000 active Swayamsevaks, while previously the figure was more than three times this.

In Meerut district, where the

Sangh was hoping to emerge as second to the Congress, the Bharatiya Kranti Dal has taken the wind out of the Sangh's sail. In the city itself, now it claims allegiance of 475 Swayamsevaks. The number of sakhas has also gone down.

In UP, the RSS had made some headway in Varanasi, Kanpur, Gorakhpur, Jhansi and Lucknow. But the loss in the western districts is so heavy that it could hardly be made up with the small gains in some of the eastern districts.

In Punjab, the performance is still worse. The Jana Sangh alliance with the Akalis has cost the RSS heavily in cadres. The Hindus, specially the urban population, have gone away from the Sangh. The traders, in the wake of bank nationalisation and because of the lukewarm attitude of the Jana Sangh ministers towards them, have opted for the new emerging Congress. Smt. Indira Gandhi's Congress has come to them as a new hope as the contradiction between the Akalis is growing and the dependence of the Jana Sangh on Akalis is deepening day by day.

Significantly, the RSS has got a foothold in the rural areas of the State by winning rich peasants in the villages. The peasantry was previously aligned with the Congress, but the Jana Sangh ministers were able to secure their loyalties for the time being. The Akalis have taken this inroad very seriously, and a move is afoot to throw out the

Sangh from the front. They are only waiting for the settlement of the Chandigarh issue. The Jana Sangh is also aware of the move.

RSS was never strong in Rajasthan. It has some influence in Jaipur, Jodhpur and some parts of Bikaner. Now, the RSS is determined to make a new bid in this State also and some of its able organisers would soon be sent to Jaipur.

In Himachal Pradesh, the RSS could not make any headway. The Gurujī was very much particular about this State and with the Syndicate group he hoped that the RSS would be able to get a foothold and strengthen its organisation in the State.

Sri Golwalkar was full of praise for the Bihar RSS, which had made new inroads even in the traditional industrial belt of the Left forces. The report from Bihar suggests that the RSS has been able to double its strength within one year, and hopes to emerge as the main force in the State.

Sri Golwalkar indicated that the work in UP and Bihar should be given special attention as these two States control the destiny of Northern India.

The RSS is waiting for the right moment to strike. Before March 1970 some movements to discredit the Indira Government might be undertaken and a serious bid made to topple it. But the leadership does not want a mid-term poll at the moment, so some alliances would be forged.

Beef In Ancient India

by

RAJA RAJENDRALALA MITRA

Being a reprint of Chapter VI of the author's book *Indo-Aryans* Vol I, published originally in 1881.

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Agricultural Modernization and Social Change—IV

FRANCINE FRANKEL

With this focus on Ludhiana, **MAINSTREAM** completes the series of articles from the study of the impact of "new strategy" in agriculture by Francine Frankel. The study, under the auspices of the **USAID**, reveals the impact of the Intensive Agricultural Development Programme (IADP) and the High-Yielding Varieties Programme (HYVP) on the socio-economic relations in the Indian countryside.

The author's conclusions, showing the growing rural economic disparity as a result of the introduction of the IADP and the HYVP, were published in the issue of November 29, 1969. The subsequent issues of December 13, 20 and 27, 1969, carried the author's field study of the IADP Districts of Burdwan, West Godavary and Palghat, respectively. All these showed the effect of the "new strategy" in the rice-growing areas. The present one reflects its impact in the wheat-growing areas

No State is more closely identified with the gains of the "green revolution" than Punjab, and with in Punjab, no District is more enthusiastically advanced as a model for emulation—by other parts of the region, and the country—than Ludhiana. There are a number of sound achievements behind this enthusiasm. On virtually all indices of agricultural modernization Ludhiana has scored spectacular progress. Even to cite the statistical record, a dull but necessary exercise in most studies, is, in the case of Ludhiana, to make an eloquent statement of the agricultural transformation occurring in the District.

Among the most striking changes are the following. Between the pre-package year of 1960-61 and 1968-69, the area under irrigation increased from 45 per cent to 70 per cent, mainly as the result of the rapid installation of tubewells. Again, between 1960-61 and 1967-68, consumption of fertilizers increased more than thirteen times, from 8 kgs to 110 kgs per cultivated acre. More dramatic still, in the short period between 1965-66 and 1968-69, the acreage under the new Mexican dwarf varieties expanded from a miniscule 170 acres to an overwhelming 420,000 acres, or an area accounting for ninety per cent of the total acreage under wheat. Finally, and the surest measure of success, yields per acre in Ludhiana increased from an average of 16.9 maunds in 1960-61 to over 40 maunds in 1968-69 that is, by over 120 per cent.

During the last two years, Ludhiana has also seen a trend toward mechanization which promises even greater efficiency in the exploitation of the new technology for intensive cropping. Exact estimates of the number of tractors now in use in the District are difficult to come by, but in April 1969, they were not less than 2,500 and possibly as many as 5,000, most representing purchases over the past two years. The major suppliers of tractors in Ludhiana, Massey-Ferguson and International Tractor, estimated that orders currently on file with all the dealers total at least another 2,500. More astounding, the the Pilot Project Officer of Ludhiana District reports that he has personally received over 40,000 loan applications from cultivators for the purchase of

tractors. Similar increases in the demand for smaller machines, especially seed-cum-fertilizer drills and threshers are also reported.

The sum total of all these changes—the installation of thousands of tubewells to bring extensive new areas under irrigation, the rapid rise in the consumption of chemical fertilizers, the widespread coverage of the wheat acreage under the high-yielding varieties, and the trend toward mechanization of farm operations—does indeed add up to an agricultural revolution. The increases in yields achieved in Ludhiana must be considered a change in kind rather than degree, so must the growing trend away from labour to capital intensive methods of production, signalling the beginning of a transformation of agriculture from an impoverished "way of life" to a profitable business occupation.

Indeed, those who have been most closely associated with the agricultural breakthrough in Ludhiana see in it even wider implications. They are inclined to view Ludhiana as a model and guidepost not only for the Punjab and other parts of the wheat-growing region, but for the future development of the Indian agricultural economy as a whole. For many, Ludhiana has become a symbol of the power of the new technology to break through the seemingly eternal circle of India's poverty by spearheading an agricultural "take-off" that will finally provide the momentum in rural resources and demand to boost India into a period of self-generating industrial growth.

These hopes are nowhere more in evidence than at the Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) in Ludhiana among the economists who have worked so hard to ensure the success of the green revolution in the Punjab. Their projections of the future development of the Indian agricultural economy—based mainly on their experience of recent changes in districts like Ludhiana—is actually a familiar model in the West. It is rooted in the principle of economic rationalization, and assumes that as in the United States and Canada, so in India, the model size of operational holding will gradually expand to coincide with the increase in the minimum

power unit now available. With the progressive displacement of bullock power by tractors and other machines, Indian farmers will for the first time be able to enjoy the economies of scale that have made agriculture a profitable business enterprise, in advanced countries. The inefficient cultivators, that is, the small farmers who cannot afford the new technology, will ultimately find the gap in returns to investment on large and small farms so great that they will sell their holdings and leave agriculture. Similarly, the tenant class will begin to disappear specifically the owner-cum-tenant cultivator who used to rely on leased land to create an economic unit of operation will also sell his small and scattered holdings as he finds large farmers unwilling to rent land that can be cultivated directly at a higher profit.

It is striking that the agricultural economists at PAU do not view the displacement of small farmers and owner-cum-tenant cultivators with alarm. On the contrary, they assume that economic rationalization will proceed in response to changing opportunity costs, that is, the class of inefficient cultivators—small farmers and tenants—will leave agriculture because as economic men they become aware of better opportunities in the urban sector. Partly on the same assumption the PAU economists also tend to reject the thesis that mechanization will lead to greater unemployment among landless labourers. First, they suggest that while machinery may displace labour from some agricultural operations, on balance, farm mechanization will probably increase employment by (1) stimulating greater intensity of cropping, and (2) enhancing the intensity of farm practices per crop, for example, by resulting in a higher number of irrigations, ploughings, and weeding. But even if the demand for labour is somewhat decreased, they argue, agricultural labourers—like the small farmers and tenants—will willingly move off the land because they discover better opportunities in the urban sector. In fact, these opportunities are linked, indeed they will be created, by the very agricultural revolution that drives them from the land.

According to S S Johl, one of the more enthusiastic proponents of this model, mechanization, "would create new types of jobs such as those of drivers, mechanics and semi-skilled labourers attending to the machinery and machine operations. This will put more demand on training institutes and there will crop up workshops and spare shops, etc. Further, the mechanization of farm operations will push up the demand and production of machines, implements and allied farm inputs which can be expected to create more jobs in the industrial sector. All this will lead to a chain reaction creating more and better jobs outside of agriculture. Thus the overall impact of mechanization would be creation of more and better jobs in the economy. We have the example of Punjab State before us. This experience is replicable in other parts of the country, it may vary only in degree and speed.¹

Such projections, are, of course, questions for empirical investigation. How realistic is the assumption

that the experience of Ludhiana is replicable—in other parts of the Punjab, in the wheat-growing region as a whole in the rest of the country? What has been the actual impact of the new technology on income distribution and economic opportunity for the various categories of agricultural families—large farmers, small cultivators, tenants and landless labourers? Obviously, any attempt to formulate answers to such far-ranging questions at this early stage in the modernization process must necessarily be extremely tentative. With this caveat in mind, such an attempt is made here, based on investigations in Ludhiana District, into the basic technical requirements of the new technology, the agro-economic environment into which it is being introduced, and the impact of the introduction of the new techniques, so far as it can now be estimated, on the economic and social position of the major agricultural classes

I

EVEN a casual review of the background of the green revolution in Ludhiana reveals that the District presented an unusually favourable environment for the rapid increase of agricultural production once modern inputs become available. Perhaps the most fortunate natural factor was the presence of large quantities of good subsoil water that could easily be tapped through minor irrigation works, that is, pumping sets and tubewells. Fertile land and the high water-table facilitated the development of irrigation works in an indirect way, since most areas were equally capable of irrigation, popular support could be mobilized for large-scale programme of land consolidation. In Ludhiana, like other parts of the Punjab—and unlike most other areas in the wheat belt—the consolidation of holding was carried out on a large scale leaving cultivators with compact and economic units for land development.

Secondly, surveys conducted in the District during 1961-64 revealed an extremely favourable agro-economic environment for agricultural modernization.² Fully 80 per cent of cultivating households in Ludhiana District operated holdings of about ten acres or above, an astronomical figure by all-India standards, and high even for the Punjab, where the mean size of some 58 per cent of all holdings is less than ten acres.³ Actually, in Ludhiana, 37 per cent of all cultivators operated holdings of 20 acres or more, accounting for about 55 per cent of the total cultivated area of the District. Another 43 per cent had holdings between 10 acres and 20 acres, taking up another 35 per cent of the area. Only 20 per cent of cultivating families operated holdings of less

¹The results of the agro-economic surveys are reported in India, Expert Committee on Assessment and Evaluation, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation (Department of Agriculture), *Intensive Agricultural District Programme, Second Report (1960-65)*, 273.

²K S Mann, *An Analysis of the Expected Shifts in Cropping Pattern of the Punjab (India) Resulting from the Introduction of High-Yielding Varieties of Crops*, OSU-USAID Contract Programme (Ludhiana, PAU, 1967), 16.

³S S. Johl, *Problems and Prospects of Indian Agriculture*, mimeo., 6-7.

than 10 acres and they accounted for only 10 per cent of the cultivated land. Moreover, although the incidence of tenancy was high—even the official estimate being that 46 per cent of all cultivators took some land on lease—the proportion of pure tenants was believed to be only 4 per cent of the total.

When IADP was started in Ludhiana District in 1961, demonstrations showing increased yields of 40 to 65 per cent per hectare with the application of the approved "package of practices" quickly convinced all categories of farmers of the superiority of modern methods. For example, during the first four years of the package programme, that is, between 1961-62 and 1964-65, the consumption of nitrogenous fertilizer increased by about eight times; and phosphatic fertilizer by over twenty times.¹ This achievement was facilitated by a very liberal policy of taccavi loans to cultivators—Village-level Workers (VLW) were authorized to issue spot loans for fertilizer of Rs 150, and Block Development Officers (BDO) and District Agricultural Officers (DAO) could authorise loans up to Rs 1,000. Cooperative societies which covered the great majority of cultivating families by the early 1960's were another source of cash loans that could be used to purchase fertilizers and pesticides.

Data collected during this period reveals that small farmers did not lag very much behind larger cultivators in their willingness to adopt modern inputs. In 1963-64, 60 per cent of farmers with holdings of more than 10 acres, 60 per cent of farmers with holdings between 5 and 10 acres, and 50 per cent of farmers with holdings as small as 5 acres, were applying fertilizers. Indeed, while small cultivators could not afford to cover as large a proportion of their holdings, those with the smallest farms actually applied higher doses of nitrogen on the area treated than cultivators in the larger holding groups.²

The major constraint on the small cultivator was not traditional conservatism, but limited resources: this is indirectly illustrated by the wide disparities in the size of average loans borrowed by cultivators from both governmental and cooperative agencies during 1963-64. Cultivators having less than 5 acres, 5 acres to 10 acres, 10 acres to 20 acres, and above 20 acres received respectively loans of Rs 39 17, Rs 216 57, Rs 249 66 and Rs 517 63.³

Nevertheless, it seems clear that during the first year of the IADP at least some farmers among all classes of cultivators were able to take advantage of the intensive development programme to increase yields per acre through the application of modern inputs, especially chemical fertilizers. At the same time, a serious disparity rapidly emerged between the large farmers with holdings of about twenty acres or more, and the majority of other cultivators.

The prospects of achieving optimum increases in yield levels with the new package of inputs, improved

seeds; chemical fertilizers and pesticides, depended on the availability of an assured water supply. In Ludhiana District, where canal irrigation covered only some 17 per cent of the area under crops, (water from which was itself dependent on the monsoons), the introduction of modern practices required the installation of minor irrigation works, especially percolation wells, pumpsets and tubewells to provide an assured source of water all the year round. Large capital investments in land improvement were actually a prerequisite to the efficient utilisation of modern methods. The cost of installation of the smallest tubewell, one commanding an area of about twenty to twenty-five acres, was about Rs 4,000 to Rs 6,000. Cultivators belonging to the largest size group already tended to have private tubewells, and generally, only cultivators with twenty acres or more were in a position either to finance new minor irrigation works from their own savings or to finance agricultural investment through loans. In fact, while the volume of government loans for percolation wells, pumping sets and tubewells increased by over ten times between 1960-61 and 1964-65, the Department of Agriculture itself insisted that only cultivators having twenty acres or more of owned land could be eligible for minor irrigation loans.

As a result, during the first phase of agricultural modernization in Ludhiana, that is, prior to the introduction of the high-yielding varieties, the large farmers with holdings of twenty acres or more made the greatest gains. With assured water, and the ready availability of modern inputs, especially chemical fertilizers, it became possible for them to replace less profitable crops like wheat plus gram mixture, and gram, with wheat. Actually, the greatest increase in wheat production in Ludhiana between 1960-61 and 1965-66 came from a striking shift in the cropping pattern. During this period, the acreage under wheat increased by 70 per cent—from about 199,000 acres to 339,000 acres—while the area under wheat plus gram mixture declined from 157,000 acres to 86,000 acres, and the area under gram from 44,000 acres to 25,000 acres.⁴ At the same time, yields per acre for wheat also showed an impressive improvement with the application of fertilizers, increasing from 16.9 maunds in 1960-61 to 24.2 maunds in 1965-66, that is, by 8.6 per cent per annum.⁵ Altogether, from both these sources, total production of wheat increased from 45.31 lakh maunds in 1960-61 to 90.60 lakh maunds in 1965-66, almost exactly double.⁶ The larger cultivators, therefore, benefited in two ways: by bringing a substantial portion of their holdings under the better paying wheat crop and by increasing their yields per acre through the application of chemical fertilizers. By contrast, the gains of the small farmers were limited mainly to some improve-

¹Intensive Agricultural District Programme, Second Report (1960-65), 267.

²Ibid., 274, 278.

³Ibid.; 282.

⁴Intensive Agricultural District Programme, Ludhiana (Punjab), Report on the Analysis of Crop Cutting Experiments, Rabi 1967-68; 11-13.

⁵Ibid.; 3.

⁶Ibid.; 11.

ment in yields during good weather years arising from an increase in the application of fertilizers

II

THE advent of the new dwarf varieties of Mexican wheat in 1966-67 marked the beginning of a second stage of agricultural development in Ludhiana District that opened unprecedented opportunities for increasing net returns to farm management. The advantages of the Mexican varieties are by now well known. Essentially their superiority over conventional strains derives from their capacity to withstand much higher doses of chemical fertilizers without lodging. While the Mexican varieties show an average response ratio of 17 to 18 pounds per acre to additional applications of nitrogen up to doses of 100 to 120 pounds, the fertilizer response ratio of conventional varieties is roughly 1:10 with yield decline occurring at applications above 40 or 50 pounds per acre. In short, with the advent of the dwarf varieties, it became possible to double output per acre from one season to the next—over and above the yield increases that had already been achieved with local varieties after five years of intensive development.

The implications of this productivity breakthrough for the profitability of wheat cultivation is roughly illustrated by the following figures. In Ludhiana, in 1966-67, the average yield of local wheat varieties was 2,108 pounds per acre, that is, a little less than 10 quintals. During the same year, those farmers who adopted the Mexican varieties (mainly Lerma Rojo), achieved an average yield of 4,235 pounds per acre, that is, about 20 quintals or exactly twice the first amount.¹ Given the procurement price of Rs 76 per quintal for Mexican varieties, the innovative farmer grossed about Rs 1,520 per acre, allowing for the cost of cash inputs of some Rs 260 per acre, the net return to management was about Rs 1,260. By contrast, the farmer growing local varieties, who probably sold his output at a somewhat higher price, of about Rs 80 per quintal, grossed only Rs 800 per acre, allowing for a lower cash expenditure on purchased inputs of about Rs 40—Rs 100, the net income per acre was about Rs 700 to Rs 760.² On the average, therefore, Ludhiana farmers who had adopted the high-yielding varieties in 1966-67, doubled their output, and in one swoop, increased their net income by over seventy per cent.

Given the powerful demonstration effect of the success of the new technology, it is not surprising that the spread of the dwarf wheat was rapid. Between 1966-67 and 1967-68, the area under Mexican varieties jumped from 18,000 acres to 245,000 acres. A second spectacular increase occurred in 1968-69, when almost the entire wheat area was covered, approximately 420,000 acres out of 450,000 acres.³ It is this comprehensive coverage that suggests all classes of cultivators in Ludhiana District are participating equally in the green revolution.

Nevertheless, discussions with the Project staff, the agricultural economists at the Punjab Agricultural University, and most important, the testimony of the cultivators themselves, indicate that while most classes of cultivators have made some gains, proportionately a much greater share has continued to go to farmers with holdings of twenty to thirty acres or more. Indeed, over the last three years, economic disparities between large and small farmers have significantly increased as a result of the introduction of the high-yielding varieties.

It is not surprising that the large farmers, that is, those with 20 acres or more, were the first to adopt the high-yielding varieties. The successful cultivation of the dwarf wheats depended even more heavily on assured supplies of water. In fact, irrigation at fixed times in the growth cycle of the plant were essential to the realization of its high-yield potential. Only cultivators with assured water, that is, large farmers having private tubewells, could initially take up the cultivation of the Mexican varieties. In addition, the new wheats also required more sophisticated farm equipment to produce optimum yields: improved ploughs, discs and harrows for proper land levelling, seed-cum-fertilizer drills for shallow planting and exact spacing of seedlings, and plant protection equipment to ward off rusts and other diseases.

Only the large farmers, most of whom had already made capital investments in tubewells and improved equipment were initially in a position to adopt the new high-yielding seed varieties, many were able to double (or even treble) their output and net income with very little extra capital outlay. Some large farmers made even more spectacular gains. With the release of more disease resistant Mexican varieties (PV18, S227 and S308) in 1967-68, there was such a high demand for scarce supplies that many cultivators took up production of seed rather than grain, and sold their stocks at "fantastic" price of about Rs 150 per quintal.

Most important, the large farmers used a substantial part of their additional income from the dwarf wheats for reinvestment in the land, and for the purchase of agricultural machinery—tractors, threshers and seed drills. The replacement of bullock power with tractors and threshers made agriculture more efficient, permitting cultivators to double and even triple crop, and to diversify their cropping pattern in order to include more profitable commercial crops like sugarcane, cotton and orchards. Some also used their capital to establish ancillary enterprises like poultry farming, or even to start small scale industries, for example, dealerships in spare parts for the new machinery that came flooding into the villages.

Indeed, as a result of all these innovations, each of which was related to the introduction of the

¹AID/W, *Outline for Country-Crop Papers, Country, India; Crop Wheat*; First Draft Copy, March, 1969, mimeo., 7

²*Ibid.*, 44.

³Intensive Agricultural District Programme, Ludhiana, Punjab, *Report on the Analysis of Crop Cutting Experiments, Rabi, 1963-68*. Final estimates are available only through 1967-68. The estimates of 420,000 acres under the high-yielding wheat varieties for 1968-69 is an unofficial figure provided by the Pilot Project Officer, IADP, Ludhiana.

high-yielding varieties, farmers with very substantial holdings of fifty acres or more experienced a qualitative change in their standard of life which represented a new departure for rural India. They attained a level of prosperity in terms of consumption—housing, and the acquisition of amenities, including refrigerators, telephones and even cars, that compares favourably with, upper middle class life in urban areas, and which has never before been seen in a village setting. Indeed, with land values increasing from about Rs 1,000 to Rs 5,000 per acre of irrigated land five years ago, to Rs 5,000 to Rs 10,000 and even Rs 15,000 an acre, a Ludhiana landowner with fifty irrigated acres now owns (untaxable) landed assets worth some Rs 2.5 lakhs to Rs 7.5 lakhs, and must be considered a wealthy man.

III

ALL this is not to say that smaller farmers, those with holdings of ten to twenty acres have not adopted the high-yielding varieties. They have, and in overwhelming numbers. But the circumstances under which the small farmers have done so—especially those with 10 to 15 acres—sharply limit their gains.

Probably the greatest aid to the smaller farmer in adopting the high-yielding varieties has been the relaxation of criteria for eligibility for tubewell loans both by Government agencies and Land Mortgage Banks—largely as a political tactic to win the popular support of small farmers. Starting with the first United Front Government in Punjab in 1967, the Agriculture Department lowered its requirement for land ownership to make farmers with fifteen acres of owned land eligible for minor irrigation loans.

The current United Front Government has gone further: cultivators with holdings as small as five acres have now become eligible for Government loans for tubewells. The Land Mortgage Bank has followed suit ignoring directives from the Reserve Bank to impose a higher floor of 8 to 10 acres, they are also advancing loans for tubewells to cultivators with five-acre holdings. With the appreciation of land values over the last five years, small farmers experience little difficulty in providing the necessary security for such loans. For example, the Land Mortgage Bank places the value of unirrigated land at Rs 5,000 an acre, and advances loans at the rate of one-half the value of land offered as security, therefore, a farmer need only mortgage two acres of unirrigated land to qualify for a loan of Rs 5,000, repayable in seven equal instalments.

Under an even more liberal scheme being operated by the Land Mortgage Bank (but financed by the Agricultural Refinance Corporation), small farmers are able to get larger amounts on even easier terms. Rs 6,500 for a tubewell, repayable over nine years, with repayment of interest only during the first year. The easy credit terms have doubled the business of the Land Mortgage Bank over the last two years. In 1967-68, the Bank advanced a total of Rs 31 lakhs in loans, of which about Rs 20 lakhs were for tubewells. During 1968-69, total advances

jumped to Rs 60 lakhs of which Rs 42 lakhs were for tubewells.¹ According to the Chairman of the Land Mortgage Bank, the majority of these loans for minor irrigation has gone to small farmers with ten acres or less.

There is also plentiful production credit available from the cooperatives. In Ludhiana, virtually all cultivating families are members of primary agricultural credit societies. Assuming that members are not defaulters, they can get personal surety loans at the standard scale of Rs 300 per acre of wheat, distributed mostly in kind. In fact, in 1967-68, the Punjab Government took special steps to see that adequate credit facilities were available with the cooperatives, by financing a large new subscription to the share capital of the central cooperative banks. Compared to Rs 7.33 lakhs of Government share capital invested in the Ludhiana Central Cooperative Bank in 1966-67, there were Rs 59.33 lakhs in 1967-68. Together with modest increases in share capital from the member societies, reserves and other funds, Bank's total owned funds increased from Rs 56.56 lakhs in 1966-67 to Rs 128.48 lakhs in 1967-68.

As an A class Bank with a borrowing capacity of four times owned funds from the Reserve Bank, the State Government's additional contribution to share capital actually created an extra borrowing capacity of Rs 200 crores. In fact, the Bank's working capital did increase from Rs 392.10 lakhs in 1966-67 to Rs 520.05 lakhs in 1967-68. The most striking evidence of increased business activity however came from the sharp spurt in advances for short-term loans between Rabi 1967-68 and Rabi 1968-69—from Rs 250 lakhs (Rs 86 lakhs in cash and Rs 164 lakhs in kind) to Rs 451 lakhs (Rs 451 lakhs cash and Rs 348 in kind).²

Discussions with officials of the Central Cooperative Bank again confirm that advances to the small farmer, particularly cultivators with 10 to 15 acres, were mainly responsible for this striking increase. It is this class of cultivator that is relying most heavily on the cooperatives for financing the costlier inputs required by the high-yielding varieties. Moreover, while every category of farmer has become somewhat more indebted over the last few years, the 10 to 15 or 20 acre farmer is falling comparatively deeper into debt. Bank officials estimate that the indebtedness of this group of farmers has increased by about

¹Figures provided by the Secretary of the Land Mortgage Bank, Ludhiana.

²The figures are compiled from material supplied by the Punjab State Cooperative Bank, Chandigarh, especially, *A short Note on the Working of the Punjab State Cooperative Bank Ltd.*, showing the break-up of advances made by central cooperative banks to societies during Rabi 1967-68 and 1968-69; and a separate mimeographed statement showing the comparative position of shares, owned funds and deposits of the central cooperative banks from 1965-66 through 1967-68. The Ludhiana Central Cooperative Bank Ltd., Ludhiana, also made available comparative figures from 1960-61 to 1967-68 in a mimeographed statement, "Roles and Achievements of Cooperatives in IADP, Ludhiana."

50 per cent over levels of just one or two years ago. One obvious implication is that a substantial part of the profits that can be expected from the introduction of the high-yielding varieties on small farms will be siphoned off by debt repayment at least for the next few years.

Worse still, once having incurred this indebtedness, the small farmer is still, at a disadvantage in maximizing returns to his investment. Foremost among his limitations is the small size of the farm itself. At present, the command area of the smallest tubewell is about 20 to 25 acres. Extension workers, and the economists at PAU agree that the optimum size of holding for the efficient cultivation of the high-yielding varieties, assuming a tubewell and bullock power is about 20 to 25 acres, this floor can be reduced with efficient management to 15 acres, but not below. Necessarily, therefore, the small farmer is denied the economies of scale enjoyed by larger landowners, the returns to his investment in a tubewell will be lower than on 20 to 25 acre farms.

The limitation of size is also a crucial constraint with respect to mechanization. In Ludhiana District, replacement of bullock power by tractors and other machines is considered economic only on holdings of 25 to 30 acres and above. Not only does a tractor represent a major capital investment—ranging from the black market price of the smallest Russian built tractor at about Rs 15,000 to Rs 24,000 or more for a large Massey-Ferguson, but annual maintenance, calculated on the basis of a thirty-acre holding, amounts to some Rs 300 a year for servicing; Rs 600 for spare parts, and Rs 400 for diesel or gasoline. Other machines are less costly, but still expensive for the small farmer, for example, a small thresher costs about Rs 720, a small combination thresher-winnowing Rs 1600, and a seed-cum-fertilizer drill another Rs 2750—Rs 3000.¹

Nevertheless, the startling fact is that the majority of loan applications received for tractors by the Pilot Project Officer comes from farmers with fifteen acres or less. The Land Mortgage Bank has recently had a similar experience. Since 1963, when it first began giving loans for tractors, and until 1967, only the larger farmers with holdings of 30 acres or more applied for such loans. Within the last two years, however, the Land Mortgage Bank reports more loan applications from 15 to 25 acre farmers than from cultivators with 30 acres or more. Since criteria for credit-worthiness are established on the same principles as for tubewells, except that loans are advanced at one half the value of irrigated land—placed at Rs 8,000 an acre—a cultivator with about six acres of irrigated land to mortgage would be eligible for a tractor loan of about Rs 24,000.

Despite the confidence of the small farmer, however, the Land Mortgage Bank has viewed the recent trend with mounting alarm. In fact, so concerned did the Bank become at the large number of small farmers taking loans for tractors that as of March 1969, it was decided to limit the percentage of loans allocated for tractors to 15 per cent of the

total advanced. The view that mechanization is not an economic proposition for the small farmer, that is, in this context, cultivators with less than 25 or 30 acres, is also shared by the principal suppliers of agricultural machinery in Ludhiana District. They suggest that easy credit is tempting small farmers to purchase machines without much thought for how they would repay their loans, in some cases, simply for prestige reasons—to keep up with the Jones (or Singhs). In any event, there is virtually unanimous agreement that the present demand for tractors and other machinery among this class of cultivators is completely unjustified on economic grounds, and that it will collapse within a year or two as the farmers themselves discover it to be an uneconomic proposition. Once again, the small farmer is unlikely to find the same opportunities for maximizing farm income through double and multiple cropping that have come to large cultivators with the spread of mechanization.

There are other reasons why returns to the small farmer from the introduction of the high-yielding varieties are apt to be less than on larger farms. First, considering the high costs involved, they are less likely to use optimum doses of chemical fertilizers, and to achieve the maximum yield potential of the new varieties. This is indirectly confirmed by the decrease in average yields per acre of Mexican wheat reported in 1968-69 compared to 1966-67, from 20 quintals an acre to 14 quintals.² In the earlier year, mainly large farmers were involved, two years later, almost all cultivators had adopted the new varieties. Second, the cost of the inputs have themselves increased over the last two years, especially since the recent excise tax on diesel oil and fertilizers, so that returns to investment are now less.

In sum, once all these limitations are taken into account, the ten to fifteen acre farmer can only make marginal gains from the introduction of the high-yielding varieties for some years to come. This is confirmed by interviews with cultivators in this size-class who report only modest increases in net income after the introduction of the high-yielding varieties—certainly not enough to make any qualitative change in their standard of life, but just sufficient to improve the general level of consumption. As one ten-acre farmer put it, the main impact of the green revolution on his family is that they are "feeling just a little better after passing through very bad days."

Actually, the ten to 15 acre farmers who have adopted the high-yielding varieties at such great cost in indebtedness are in a much more vulnerable position than they realize. The prospect that they can liquidate their debts, and continue to make a modest gain from their investment, rests heavily on maintaining the current procurement price of

¹Estimates and prices as given by the sales manager for Massey-Ferguson and International Tractor in Ludhiana.

²According to the *Report on the Analysis of Crop Cutting Experiments*, IADP, Ludhiana, average yields of Mexican wheat were only 3,628 pounds per acre or approximately 16 quintals in 1967-68, p 3. During 1968-69, it is estimated that this declined further to an average of 3,280 pounds per acre or about 14 quintals.

Mexican wheat at the artificially high level of Rs 76 per quintal. Yet, with the large spurt in wheat production over the last two years, open market prices for Mexican wheat—without price support—are estimated at Rs 60—Rs 65 per quintal¹. In 1968-69, the Punjab Government did succeed in persuading the Centre not to reduce the procurement price to Rs 70 a quintal, and undoubtedly equally determined efforts will be made in 1969-70. But it is unlikely that the Central Government can continue indefinitely to purchase virtually the entire Mexican wheat crop at these rates when the new varieties do not find a ready market—their brown colour marking them as inferior to the amber-coloured *desi* varieties in the minds of most consumers.

In fact, the Central Government has been able to sustain the high procurement prices for Mexican wheat until now only because they could compensate for the high costs of domestic stocks by pooling them with low priced imported foodgrains, and issuing all grains through the fair-price shops at a price that struck an average between the two. Specifically the economic issue price of PL480 wheat being some Rs. 65-66 per quintal, and the economic issue price of Mexican wheat (given procurement rates of Rs 76 per quintal) being Rs 87-88 per quintal, the Government was able to avoid large losses on its distribution system by setting the price of all coarse grains at Rs 78 per quintal². But once concessional imports of foodgrains are phased out after 1971, the Central Government will find it impossible to maintain the present procurement price without heavy losses. Indeed, the Food Minister has already announced that beginning in Rabi 1969-70, procurement prices of Mexican wheat will have to be lowered and issue prices stepped up.

IV

In Ludhiana, however, it is the bottom twenty per cent of cultivators, with holdings of less than ten acres, who have fared worst as a result of the green revolution. They may have been able to make some marginal gains in good weather years by applying small additional doses of chemical fertilizers to Mexican wheat, but, in general, they have not been able to sustain the indivisible inputs—tubewells and agricultural machinery—required for the efficient cultivation of the new varieties. Actually, there is some reason to believe that their position may have suffered an absolute deterioration as a result of the “green revolution”.

It has already been mentioned that the incidence of tenancy in Ludhiana is quite high. Official estimates are that 46 per cent of all cultivators take some land

on lease. The Pilot Project Officer and the economists at PAU estimate that about one-fourth of the cropped area in Ludhiana is currently cultivated by tenants. While exact figures are not available to indicate the rented in component of operational holdings by different size-classes in Ludhiana District, an investigation of selected sample villages in Punjab State as a whole, conducted by the PAU in 1966-67, indicated that this proportion is as high as 27 per cent on holdings of less than 10 acres. Significantly, it declines to 15 per cent on medium size holdings of about 20 acres, and to little over two per cent on large holdings of 50 acres³.

There is little doubt that the position of tenants has become more difficult as a result of the “green revolution”. With profits from direct cultivation rising, there are now more farmers who want to lease in land than lease out. Moreover, large farmers now find a positive advantage in larger units of management, with new possibilities for more efficient agriculture with mechanization. Those large farmers who still give out some land on lease usually demand a premium in higher rents. Compared to five years ago, cash rents on leased in land have increased from about Rs 300—350 to Rs 500 per acre. More commonly, share-cropping arrangements are made. In some cases, the traditional rate of a 50-50 division of gross output between the owner and the tenant is maintained, and the owner may also pay half the cost of fertilizers and diesel for irrigation. But in many instances, tenants are not so fortunate. Landowners may ask for 70 per cent of the crop as their share, arguing that with new methods, the tenant still receives a larger absolute portion from 30 per cent of a higher output than fifty per cent of a lower outturn. But, since most small owner-cum-tenant cultivators cannot afford to invest in optimum production practices, they find the new rentals uneconomic, and gradually are forced to give up as a cultivator.

One solution has been to “rent” out small holdings of two to four acres to large farmers, who supply the actual owners with modern inputs for cultivation and take fifty per cent of the crop as their share. Some small owners have also decided to take advantage of rising land values and sell their small holdings, either to liquidate debts, or to start a new enterprise, such as poultry farming. Pure tenants, those with no land or bullocks to sell or “rent”, are in the worst position. They may be taken on as a sharecropper by a large farmer who supplies all the inputs, and pays the tenant 20 per cent of the crop as his share.

V

THE situation of landless labourers in Ludhiana District appears much more favourable at first glance. Accounting for only 18 per cent of all rural families, they have never been so numerous as to suffer from the worst extremes of rural under-

¹AIDW Outline for Country-Crop Papers. Country, India, Crop, Wheat, 29

²Estimates of economic issue prices compared to actual issue prices of Mexican wheat and of the rough adjustments permitted by the availability of low-priced imports of PL480 wheat are taken from an interview with the Managing Director of the Food Corporation of India, in New Delhi, August 1969.

³K. S. Mann, *An Analysis of the Expected Shifts in Cropping Pattern of the Punjab (India) Resulting from the Introduction of High-Yielding Varieties of Crops*, 16-17.

employment. Even before the introduction of the high-yielding varieties, agricultural labourers could generally find some work eight months a year. Moreover, during the peak harvest period, there was always a relative shortage of labour, and many farmers have traditionally relied on migratory workers from Uttar Pradesh to supplement the local labour force. Labourers in Ludhiana District have been fortunate in other ways: many belong to the Scheduled Castes, and those who manage to pass their Matriculation or get a BA degree—still very few—can benefit from the policy of reserved places in Government services to secure employment as a peon or a Grade III officer. Others can follow a more traditional avenue of social nobility in Ludhiana District and join the army.

During the first stage of agricultural modernization in Ludhiana, it appears that the position of agricultural labourers improved. The growing prosperity of the larger farmers generated an increased level of economic activity that added to employment opportunities during the off-season, especially in the construction of house and roads; and in land improvement schemes like the installation of tubewells, drains and culverts. At the same time, the existence of good roads, and a sprinkling of small industries in Ludhiana town made it possible for some agricultural workers to find alternative employment in local factories while still maintaining their home in the village.

With the large-scale introduction of the high-yielding varieties in 1967-68, the economic situation of landless labourers seemed to improve further. Compared to a few years earlier, when a labourer remained idle for three or four months a year, he now found employment all the year round. This was due mainly to more intensive cropping with the large increase in irrigation facilities; more labour intensive farm practices per crop, and diversification of the cropping pattern which creates additional demand for workers during traditionally slack seasons, for example, during December to mid-March, for crushing sugarcane, and during July and August for hoeing and weeding maize. Moreover, the new level of affluence of many cultivators accelerated the pace of new investment, creating additional employment in the off-season for installation of tubewells, land levelling, and repair of irrigation channels, and also for construction of roads and houses.

At the same time, daily cash wages for casual labour increased. Rates generally doubled over the last few years from about Rs 2.5 to Rs 5 plus tea. In areas where local labour was particularly scarce, rates went as high as Rs 6, and in some cases also included food. Work on construction projects during the off season also brought about Rs 5 per day. Moreover, during the peak harvest season, when labour was scarce, reports of wages as high as Rs 8 or Rs 10, even Rs 12 per day plus food were common.

Notwithstanding all this, the labourers generally do not feel that they have made any substantial net gains over the last few years. Indeed, they tend to argue that the rise in prices of essential commodities has neutralized any improvement arising from

higher levels of cash income. Actually, the labourers of Ludhiana still tend to judge the real level of their wellbeing not in terms of cash earnings, which are devalued by inflation, but by the market price of the crop-share that labourers have traditionally received at harvest. It is largely on the basis of this yardstick that labourers assert they have experienced very little improvement in real income over the last few years.

Despite this subjective assessment, it is still true that the introduction of the high-yielding varieties initially enhanced the economic position of agricultural labourers by increasing their bargaining position at harvest time. Large farmers engaged in multiple cropping were greatly concerned with speedy harvesting of standing crops. In addition, with larger crops to handle, more labourers were required to complete the job within the allotted time. Finally, whereas the *desi* varieties could be harvested over a period of twenty days or so, the dwarf wheats tend to shatter unless they are harvested within ten or fifteen days. With such a high premium placed on timely labour, it is not surprising that agricultural workers attempting to exploit their new advantage by bargaining with landowners for increased wages, often threatening to work elsewhere if their terms were not met. Even with migratory labour also available, these techniques were partially successful.

Actually far from believing that the labourers deserve any increase in wages, landowners are convinced that with the output of the new varieties roughly doubled, they would be justified in reducing the labourers' customary crop-share from 1/20 to 1/40 of the harvest. The labourers, for their part, assert that they should share in the increased output in the same proportion as the landowners, that is, the traditional rate of 1/20 should be maintained. Over the last couple of years, a compromise has been struck which has seen the customary rate reduced from 1/20 to 1/30. Agricultural labourers now receive every thirtieth bundle they tie before putting the grain on the threshing floor. Their gains under this formula are real. To illustrate, using *desi* varieties, there are normally 80 bundles to one acre. Under the old system of division, four bundles, 1/20, averaging about 16 kilos each, were paid for harvesting. Using the high-yielding varieties, there are now some 120 bundles in an acre at the new rate of 1/30, four bundles are still paid as wages, but each now weighs 20 kilos to 25 kilos depending on the condition of the crop.¹ The net gain to the labourer, therefore, is about 25 per cent in real income, compared to gains of 50 per cent or 75 per cent or even 100 per cent realised by the landowner. Nevertheless, the increase is sufficient to permit some modest improvement in the general standard of living, for example, to provide better food, a change of clothing, a cleaner home, cups and saucers (instead of metal glasses), and in some cases, the margin necessary to send a son to school, or to keep cows or goats for milk, and even to buy a luxury item like a transistor.

¹Estimates supplied by S S Johl, Professor of Economics, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana.

Unfortunately, these gains are likely to cost the labourers dearly in the future. Already, the landowners are resentful at what they consider the labourers' blackmailing tactics. They have agreed to pay the higher wages, but have retaliated by applying other economic pressures, for example, by denying labourers traditional rights of taking fodder from the fields for their animals, or additional payments in kind of fuel and vegetables. A greater hardship for many labourers is the landowners' refusal to advance interest free loans, which used to be done, they explain for "goodwill", but which the labourers have breached by adopting bargaining tactics. More serious is the landowners' determination to convert all kind payments into cash. They have already succeeded in substituting cash for the traditional payment in kind given for winnowing operations, and they clearly intend to press this pattern for harvesting operations as well.

Actually, the large farmers believe that the labourers' present bargaining power is bound to be transitory. They are aware that it is only at the harvest time "that the labourers are our masters, and during the rest of the year we are their masters". The large farmers are now determined to mechanize harvesting operations as quickly as possible, in order to be rid entirely of their dependence on agricultural labourers.

VI

IF one reviews the experience of Ludhiana as a whole, it appears that most classes of cultivators have made some gains as a result of the "green revolution". Nevertheless, the benefits have been very heavily skewed in favour of the large farmer, the cultivator with 25 to 30 acre or more, who has been able to exploit the full potentiality of the new technology for multiple cropping and diversification of the cropping pattern by large capital investments in land improvement and mechanization. Although 15 to 25 acre farmers have also experienced absolute increases in output and income, the gap between the large and medium farmers has undoubtedly widened. Small farmers, those with 10 to 15 acres have so far made only marginal gains, and ultimately they may even find their farm operations overcapitalized and uneconomic. Some farmers with less than ten acres have experienced an absolute deterioration in their economic position with the increasing difficulty of finding leased-in land on reasonable terms.

Ludhiana being the best case, it is extremely doubtful that the present trend toward mechanization will have the sanguine outcome that the PAU economists project, that is, an increase in the model size of holding to coincide with the minimum power (tractor) unit, while sustaining only a minor decrease in rural employment that can be absorbed by the creation of new job opportunities outside agriculture. This, no doubt, is the western model, and for the moment, it appears to be the model for Ludhiana, but Ludhiana is atypical even for the Punjab. The average size of holdings is larger—extending greater opportunities for modern farming to more cultivators, and there is a relatively well-developed industrial

sector, as well as a tradition of recruitment into the army, to help absorb displaced tenants, small farmers and agricultural workers. Where these advantages do not exist, and they do not even in some districts of the Punjab, rapid mechanization has already produced "large numbers of unemployed or underemployed young men in the villages, who may present serious socio-economic and law and order problems in the years to come".¹

Perhaps more immediately serious, is the rapid deterioration in "good relations" between landowners and agricultural labourers with an acceleration of the erosion of traditional ties based on payments in kind. Even in Ludhiana, where agricultural labourers are considered the most prosperous in the State, the sense of injustice nurtured by this change has already led to the first confrontations between "landlord" and "labourer" factions in the villages. With a rapid increase in political awareness among the Scheduled Castes, and the backward classes generally, even conservative political leaders predict that if nothing is done to check the growing inequalities at the village level, economic and class issues will increasingly replace communal questions as the foremost political problem in the State. As for the Leftist parties, the CPI has been actively working toward this end ever since they participated in the first United Front Government of 1967, by vigorous efforts to organize agricultural labourers for strikes at harvest time.

In other parts of the wheat belt, for example, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, where the majority of cultivating households operate holdings of less than ten acres, where iniquitous tenurial arrangements are an additional drain on the meagre resources of the small farmers, where the incidence of landless labourers is higher; and where the level of industrial development is low, it is difficult to see how more than a small section of the agricultural population will be able to realize significant benefits from the wheat revolution. Indeed, the gains in these areas are likely to be even more heavily skewed, the increase in disparities larger, and the rate of displacement greater than can reasonably be expected to be absorbed through the creation of alternative job opportunities outside agriculture. Occurring as these changes are in a social context characterized by an erosion in traditional ties, and an incipient polarization on the basis of class, it would not be surprising if efforts by political parties to mobilize social discontent for power purposes would lead to increasing instances of class confrontation in rural areas.

In the rice belt, where each of these problems is magnified several fold, and all tend to occur together, the problems of ensuring a reasonable degree of equity in the distribution of gains from the new technology are even more formidable—as is likely to be the law and order problem, arising from a failure to do so. This emerges clearly from a consideration of agricultural modernization and social change in the predominantly paddy-growing districts of West Godavari, Tanjore, Palghat and Burdwan.

(Concluded)

¹The Statesman, May 23, 1969,

Needs of Rural Punjab

PRITAM SINGH

THERE is no doubt that unemployment is a countrywide problem and it cannot be completely solved within the boundary of a State economy. We have an open economy; therefore, the shocks suffered in one part have their impact on the other parts, too. But this does not mean that we should ignore the remedial measures required to improve the situation.

Punjab's economy is predominantly agricultural and the industrial sector consists of mainly small-scale consumer units. Any economic distress in the agricultural sector can upset the economic balance of the State. Measures need to be taken not only to augment the prosperity in the agricultural sector but also to promote industrial growth.

Punjab possesses the most virile and hard-working agricultural community due to which it registered 3.8, 5.1 and 5.5 per cent annual growth rate in agricultural production during the First, Second and the Third Five Year Plans, respectively, as compared to 2.8, 3.9 and 3.42 for the country as a whole during the same period.

Limited Effect

A "green revolution" is sweeping the State, but it is confined mainly to the big landowners and the prosperous sections of the farming community. The agricultural sector cannot make its full contribution towards a prosperous Punjab unless the small landowners are also drawn into the innovative techniques of modern and scientific farming.

The Table I shows that the wooden plough is still very com-

monly used by the cultivators and the iron plough (soil stirring and soil investing), in spite of its great utility, is possessed by even less than half of the farmers. Tractors are owned by only one per cent, and the spray pump, which is indispensable for spraying insecticides, by even less than one per cent of the farmers.

TABLE I

PERCENTAGE OF CULTIVATORS OWNING AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS/MACHINERY

Name of the implement/ machinery	Percentage (Punjab— post- re-organisation)
Plough (Wooden)	92.2
Soil stirring plough	49.3
Soil investing plough	56.3
Triphali	11.9
Bar barrow	2.1
Cotton drill	3.3
Sugarcane crusher	26.6
Spray pump	0.8
Tractor	1.2

Source: Report on the Use of Fertilizers and Agricultural Implements in the Punjab—Kharif 1964-65, Statistician, Department of Agriculture, Punjab.

Three main props of the "green revolution" are timely irrigation, high-yielding varieties of seeds and fertilizers. But, again as would be clear from the Table II, only a microscopic minority has been able to afford tubewells and pumping sets. The majority has still to depend on wells which cannot ensure adequate supply of water and is also more expensive in the long run. The Persian Wheel is run with the help of draught animal

which means that the land which could be used by the farmer for raising food or cash crop, has to be set apart for fodder.

TABLE II

Means of irrigation	Percentage of cultivators using the source of irri- gation (post- re-organisa- tion)
Wells	55.7
Tubewells (oil)	3.2
Tubewells (electric)	4.8
Pumping sets (oil)	2.9
Pumping sets (electric)	3.2

Source: Report on the Use of Fertilizers and Agricultural Implements in the Punjab—Kharif 1964-65; Statistician, Department of Agriculture, Punjab.

The consumption of chemical fertilizers has increased but it is still quite low when compared with other advanced countries. Similarly, improved varieties of seeds have also been used only by those who could afford their high prices. The benefit of the improved agricultural practices has been available only to the rural elite.

A survey for the estimation of areas brought under improved agricultural practices in Punjab during 1963-64, was conducted by the Department of Agriculture, Punjab, and the reasons advanced by the cultivators for not adopting improved agricultural practices were listed as in Table III.

It is worth noting that the Report has made it very clear, "The cultivators are generally conversant with the new techniques and also accept their utility, but do not adopt them due to various hindrances standing in their way." These hindrances have been shown in Table III.

If the "green revolution" is broad based, it will result in intensive cultivation and generate more employment and income in the rural area. In other words, effective demand would rise which would give a fillip to the con-

TABLE III
PERCENTAGE OF CULTIVATORS NOT ADOPTING VARIOUS
IMPROVED PRACTICES BY REASONS

Reasons for non-adoption	Improved seeds	Chemical fertilizers	Green manure	Chemical pesticides
Kharif 1963-64				
Lack of finances	30.9	28.0	10.2	1.9
Difficulties in obtaining	39.0	27.8	—	62.8
Absence of irrigation	44.6	51.1	50.4	—
Size of holding	8.5	12.1	23.7	4.8
Others	8.5	24.4	2.8	22.4
Rabi 1963-64				
Lack of finances	31.3	24.3	14.4	20.0
Difficulties in obtaining	19.5	21.1	7.4	59.2
Absence of irrigation	31.3	44.1	44.5	—
Size of holding small	12.5	10.7	35.6	5.5
Others	7.3	3.0	3.3	26.8

Source. Report on the Survey for Estimation of Areas brought under Improved Agricultural Practices, Punjab, 1963-64

sumer industries in the industrial sector. Due to multiplier effect, income and employment in the secondary and tertiary sectors would increase several fold. The installed capacity in the industrial sector, which is at present lying idle, would be then fully utilised.

Low Incomes

If a vast mass of consumers in the rural sector continue to have low incomes, then the domestic market would not develop and the industrial sector would also continue to suffer under the dead weight of idle capacity.

According to the waste land survey conducted by the Agriculture Department, 48,600 hectares of cultivable wasted land is reclaimable. After reclamation, this area may be distributed amongst the agricultural graduates and agricultural engineers. They may be given financial aid and other facilities to set up their own model farms. These farms would act as demonstration farms for neighbouring cultivators.

At present, the new agricultural technology is suited to only bigger farms. But the unit of cultivation in Punjab is small. Therefore, from the new technology only big landowners can benefit. It should be adapted to the peculiar circumstances prevailing in the State.

We can take a lesson from Japan. The unit of cultivation

in Japan is also very small and they have developed a "walking tractor" there, its blades are power driven but it is operated by a walking man and can plough very small fields. Its price is also very low. Similarly, other modern agricultural implements are also designed for use in small cultivation units and which even the small peasants can easily afford.

Mechanization of agriculture does not mean always displacement of labour as has been erroneously held. Due to mechanization, intensity of cultivation increases and the agriculture sector becomes capable of absorbing more labour. There are certain operations which can be done only by human labour, for example, inter-culture, weeding, or hoeing.

Unemployed Mechanics

Due to extensive use of machinery, some of the trained craftsmen would also get work by opening repair shops. Tractor mechanics are facing unemployment. They can be helped to open their workshops in the rural area or Government may start tractor repair stations in the rural centres where there is concentration of tractors and thus provide employment to unemployed technicians.

Due to mechanization, income content of employment in the

rural areas would rise and, therefore, it would be able to attract and absorb educated unemployed of the rural sector.

To strengthen the agricultural base, the farmers should be ensured remunerative prices and the prices should be kept stable because fluctuations adversely affect production.

As we are now entering the era of surplus economy, the procurement price is often the minimum support price. There is no buyer in the market except the Government agencies. Sometimes, the farmers feel that the procurement price is not up to their expectation and they could get better returns by growing some other crop.

It would be better if the Government announces the procurement price before the sowing season so that the farmer could plan his cropping pattern in the manner most economical to him. Arrangements should also be made for grading the agricultural produce so that it can fetch better price in the market.

Crop Insurance

New agricultural technology demands very heavy doses of inputs like high-yielding varieties of seeds, insecticides, fertilizers and water. If a single crop fails it can ruin the farmer and he is not left with adequate resources to raise the next crop because of the capital intensive character of the new farming practices. In view of this, it would be in fitness of things if crop insurance is introduced through a phased programme.

More agro-based industries should be established. Industrialists may be encouraged to set up food processing and food preservation industries. There is a strong demand for good agricultural machinery. The Government should strictly enforce the quality control and encourage the sale of quality goods.

Rural works programme like roads, reclamation, building of more schools, health centres and veterinary hospitals would also act as an employment booster. Rural electrification would go a long way in this respect.

Immediate Programme of Land Reforms

H.D. MALAVIYA

Sri Malaviya, Convenor of the All-India Congress Forum for Socialist Action, has submitted a memorandum to the Congress President, Sri Jagjivan Ram, at the time of the Congress plenary session at Bombay in December 1969. The introductory part of the memorandum, reviewing the tardy implementation of the land reform laws in India since Independence, was published in the **MAINSTREAM** of December 27, 1969. Following is the concluding part of the memorandum, suggesting a 26-point programme for a speedy implementation of the land reforms in the country.

CONGRESS President, Sri Jagjivan Ram, has said that a "long term social policy which integrates short-term food policies and medium-term agricultural policies, cannot be effective with merely ameliorative programmes. It has to reach down to radical reorientations of the basic institutions themselves"

Jagjivan Babu goes on to pose the following basic questions "Is land relation in this country rational? Production depends on the rationality of the land relation. If the farmer is not assured of his tenure, if the tenancy is not permanent, if he is liable to be evicted next year, can he conceivably invest as much as is necessary for the development of the land or for the increase of production?"

The answers to the questions posed by Sri Jagjivan Ram are obvious. The basic tragedy of post-Independence India, from which has originated all other distortions and discrepancies, is the failure to place our land relations on a rational basis which can only be to make the tiller the owner and provide him the security of tenure and unhindered enjoyment of the fruits of his hard labour and toil.

Such a programme which must also include correction of aberrations of land reform implementation all through the years since our Independence, can be the following

(i) Immediate abolition of all remaining intermediary tenures

res

(ii) All existing tenancies to be declared permanent and non-resumable, exception being made only in the case of physical disability of the landowner or in case he serves in the defence forces.

(iii) All surrenders not duly registered by the revenue authorities to be nullified. Where the landowner has not taken possession of the surrendered land even if the surrender was valid, should not be entitled to take possession of the surrendered land.

(iv) Those who have tilled the standing crops, to harvest it and keep it, giving to the landlords their due according to law

(v) A moratorium to be declared on future payments of compensation. A tribunal comprising elected legislators and peasant representatives to decide deserving cases of poor divested landlords to whom compensation may be paid.

(vi) The right of resumption by the landlords to be forthwith terminated for ever.

(vii) Deterrent punishment for wrongful evictions and the ejected tenant to be restored the land from which he was wrongfully ejected

(viii) Tenants or sharecroppers holding non-resumable land to be declared owner-cultivators and given the right to transfer their land to officially sponsored institutional credit agencies for obtaining investment credit so that the newly conferred land-

ownership is backed by the provision of credit. For this purpose, a Bhartiya Krishak Bank to be forthwith created

(ix) Credit facilities to farmers should not be property-based but should be based on viability of production. Credit facilities to be provided to small farmers and landless agricultural labourers for ancillary activities, such as, dairy, cattle and poultry farming or pig-breeding.

(x) Complete and total elimination of non-residents as owner of land. Landlords who claim to be owner-cultivators be statutorily required to live in the villages for the major part of the year.

(xi) Total and complete ban on leasing of land except in case of physical disability or defence services

(xii) Ceiling on landholdings to be imposed on the family rather than on the individual and there should be no resumption

(xiii) All fictitious partition of land among family members to escape ceiling laws to be inquired into by special tribunals comprising popular representatives and annulled

(xiv) Lower ceilings than the existing ones already legislated to be fixed on all existing landholdings

(xv) A lower ceiling than already legislated to be fixed on future acquisitions also so that gradually a homogenous agricultural community may emerge in a foreseeable future with families holding land between 5 to 15 acres.

(xvi) The definition of "family" should be modified to include only husband, wife, sons, unmarried daughters, grandsons and unmarried grand-daughters to ensure against clandestine partitions and transfers to escape ceiling regulations

(xvii) The existing exemptions given in ceiling laws to landlords in the name of tank-fisheries, orchards, efficiently managed farms, etc, to be forthwith ended

(xviii) All lands on which houses of agricultural labourers stand today to be forthwith regarded as owned by the labourer without payment of any compensation or consideration whatsoever.

(xix) Setting up of an effective machinery to enforce minimum wages in agriculture.

(xx) All encroachments on tribal lands by outsiders to be ended and tribal lands already encroached upon to be restored to the tribals.

(xxi) Till such time as tenancies are not finally abolished, penalties be provided for the landlord for not issuing receipts. In case of dispute, the tenant be allowed to deposit rent in the court or some other appropriate authority which should be regarded as in regular order

(xxii) No tenant should be liable to eviction for non-payment of rent the arrears being recoverable from his produce or other assets

(xxiii) Land records to be brought upto date and provision made for recognition of the rights of sharecroppers. In some States where land records do not exist or are perfunctory, special commissions be appointed to complete the land records within a specified time.

(xxiv) The Central Government to take more direct interest in the implementation of land reforms. Delays in assenting to State legislation be ended. The question of setting up a Ministry for Land Reforms may be considered

(xxv) Shri Nath Pai's constitution Amendment Bill to be enacted by Parliament without any further delay. Article 226 of the Constitution to be amended so as to exclude land reform legislation from the purview of court injunctions and stay orders

(xxvi) A Land Army to be created for implementation of land reforms. The present bureaucratic set up has proved incapable of reorientation, and waste, delay and corruption are its outstanding feature, and ignorance of social processes its pitiful aspect. Not only does it not understand the crying need for a new social order, it is in league with the enemies of that order. It cannot be entrusted to implement such vital social changes as land reforms. The Land Army should consist of educated and patriotic youth, particularly from the rural areas, and the urban unemployed.

Up till now, in all the years of land reforms since our Independence our administration has revealed stark ignorance of the reality that economic development is not just a matter of physical inputs or material components. It is also very much the function of the response ratio of the human factor to production opportunities

The "wheat revolution" or the "green revolution", as it has been called, heightened the complacency. After two consecutive years of drought, when the country reaped a record Rabi harvest in 1968, there arose a chorus from the official quarters about Indian agriculture having turned the corner, about the wonders of high-yielding varieties, etc, and the possibility of India becoming

a net exporter of foodgrains in the near future

The recent Chief Ministers' Conference, the passionate pronouncements of the Prime Minister and the Food Minister, the warning of the Home Minister, and the Home Ministry study are most welcome as they reveal that the growing gap in income distribution in our countryside has become a subject of deep concern to our leadership

The emphasis on the need for immediate and efficient implementation of land reforms is a recognition of the hard reality that unless the human factor responds and takes full advantage of material facilities provided, we will not get full dividends from any material investment that we may make in Indian economy

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Realignment in Arab World

K.M.P.

THE Arabs have been searching for unity for a long time and though there is an Arab League and the Arab Heads of State meet often enough, unity has evaded them. Not even the presence of a foreign element in their body politic has led the Arab states to coordinate their political and military strategies.

The Arab leaders are all agreed that Israel constitutes a danger to the Arab nation, that Zionism and imperialism are threats which they can only ignore at their peril. Yet, every attempt to bring about unity has failed.

Internecine Quarrels

On the other hand, instead of uniting against Israel, the Arab states are devoting their attention to internecine quarrels. Iraq is too busy suppressing the Kurds to utilise its resources in the war against Israel, the Lebanese are more interested in making money than in liberating the territories under occupation and consider the Fedayeen to be a greater danger than the Israelis.

Saudi Arabia considers every progressive movement to be subversive and treat the existence of the Republics of Yemen and South Yemen as danger to its stability. Morocco and Tunisia are not sufficiently interested in eastern Arab affairs to extend more than verbal sympathies.

While Jordan is involved in the war, it is not willing to press the issue to the full which will bring it in conflict with the Anglo-Saxon powers. Syria is revolutionary but only as far as words are concerned, in action it has been moderate, unwilling to antagonise Israel beyond a point

and more concerned with the repercussions of its policy on the internal situation.

Algeria which was once a revolutionary and had asked the other African countries to die a little for the liberation of Portuguese colonies, proved unwilling to devote its revenue from oil for the liberation of the occupied territories, internal development for it has priority over liberation.

Rabat Summit was, therefore, bound to be a fiasco. There was widespread expectation that Arab Summit would lead to the formation of a war council, which would chalk out the military and political strategy for the liberation of the occupied territories, mobilize Arab resources and devote attention to the problem of meeting Israeli aggression.

At the Khartoum Summit, held immediately after the military debacle of June 1967, the Arabs had decided on a political solution to the problem, but neither the UN resolution of 1967 nor the efforts of Mr Gunnar Jarring had succeeded in evolving a formula acceptable to both the parties.

Direct Negotiations

Tel Aviv insisted on direct negotiations to settle the issue but since neither the Israeli hawks nor the so-called doves thought of vacating the occupied territories, the purpose which Tel Aviv had in mind was to get the Arabs to surrender, knowing fully well that the Arab people would throw out the leaders responsible for such a national humiliation.

It was primarily aimed to get rid of Nasser whom the Israelis considered as their major enemy

and an agreement with Nasser was what they really sought. Thus, direct negotiations, on which Tel Aviv insisted, was primarily to humiliate Nasser and the Arabs.

The concerted effort of the Four powers, United States, USSR, United Kingdom and France is not likely to yield any result. The Israelis even rejected the package deal which the United States offered it, the demilitarization of Sinai and the West Bank of Jordan, Sharm el Sheikh to be retained by Israel and the future of Gaza and the Arab part of Jerusalem to be settled later on.

While the West Bank would be under Jordanian sovereignty, Israel would be allowed to establish military posts at strategic points along the river which, in effect, would have turned that part of the country into an Israeli protectorate. The problem of Golan Heights was not even mentioned, Washington would most probably have allowed Israel to occupy the area.

Strategic Position

Tel Aviv, however, considered this as an American attempt at appeasement of the Arabs, for it expected Washington to support it to the hilt. To a certain extent there was justification for Israeli anger, the talk of even-handed dealing and the persistent indications that an honourable settlement with Israel is possible only through the United States, had convinced the Israelis that Washington was not prepared to write off the Arabs.

The United States had realised that its open pro-Israel policies was weakening the conservative Arab states, and since the Arab countries are some of the major producers of oil, and occupy a strategic position, it was necessary to moderate its enthusiasm for the Zionist cause.

But the proposal clearly shows that if there had been a change in American policy it was marginal and its rejection was a clear indication that a political solution, even on the basis of American proposals, was not feasible. The only alternative open to the Arabs, realist Arabs were convinced, was to prepare for war.

Time is certainly not an ally of the Arabs, in the short run at least. The Israelis will become self-sufficient in arms and with the colonisation of the occupied territories, they will consolidate their hold. The UAR cannot indefinitely maintain half a million men under arms, and the budget of £500 million will prove a crushing burden. The policy of "no peace, no war", allows the Israelis to carry on raids against Jordan and the UAR, while the other Arab countries remain unaffected.

The Arab military position has considerably improved, and if the Arab states bring all the forces at their command to bear on Israel, a victory can be won. This was the major theme of the Summit but from the time the conference opened the Arab leaders were divided.

Yemen boycotted the conference because it refused to listen to its complaint against Saudi Arabia, Syria, Iraq and South Yemen boycotted the final session because of differences on policy. Thus, the strength of the progressive camp in the Arab world was not fully represented.

It fell to the leaders of Libya, the Sudan and the UAR to put forward the progressive view, Libya made it clear that only an armed struggle can lead to liberation and it was prepared to devote all the resources to it. Libya demanded from the other Arab countries and it was backed by the United Arab Republic and the Sudan—what contributions they would make in terms of money and resources, and it got a dusty answer.

Even President Boumedienne, according to reports, was willing to transfer only a part of the arsenal Algeria had built up when its relations with Morocco were tense, but was not prepared to help with either men or money. The oil rich sheikhs wanted to know to what purpose the money would be used, the others were markedly cool.

It was, therefore, not surprising that the Summit did not even issue a joint communique. The division, however, is not between the rich and the poor countries. Oil rich countries are to be found

on both sides. The real dispute is about the nature of Arab nationalism.

The conservative Arab states fear that as long as the Israeli occupation continues Arab nationalism will gain and a war with Israel will only strengthen the forces of the Left. The evolution of the Palestinian political forces, from conservative nationalism the Palestinians have moved towards a social and political revolution, is a pointer which they cannot ignore.

Social Revolution

The evolution of political movements in the Arabian peninsula also emphasises the same fact and they are, therefore, suspicious of Arab nationalism. It is this fear of Arab nationalism that makes them the allies of Western powers, for they have similar interests. Nasser and, now Arafat pose a threat to them, and if Israel did not exist they would willingly have created it, for Israel is seen as a decoy diverting attention from social revolution at home.

But progressive Arab opinion particularly after the Sudanese and Libyan revolutions, is getting convinced that liberation of Palestine is closely linked with social transformation at home.

The only card which the conservative Arab states can play against nationalism is religion. They tried to exploit the el Aqsa mosque outrage to kindle the religious fanaticism in order to

submerge Arab nationalism in Islamic unity.

Countries like Turkey, Iran and Pakistan are as suspicious of Arab nationalism as the conservative Arab countries. One of the major objectives of the Baghdad Pact was to contain Arab nationalism in the interest of western imperialism. The Anglo-Saxon proposals for an Arab Gulf grouping is also directed to this end.

But the failure of the Rabat Summit to take any concrete step for the liberation of Palestine, the West Asian countries which maintain diplomatic relations with Israel were not even prepared to consider a break, proved to the Arab people that Islamic unity would not further their cause.

Though technically defeated at the Summit, the progressive Arabs have won a victory. They have convincingly showed that the Arabs have to depend on their own strength, and the other Islamic states were not willing to consider the liberation of Palestine as an Islamic cause.

Now that the conservatives have also backed out, the Arab people will be able to continue the struggle against reaction at home and the struggle against imperialism in Palestine. The combined forces of the progressive states is sufficient for this, for the Arab people will not tolerate for long the rulers who are sacrificing national interests for their personal profits.

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DISCUSSION

MAINSTREAM published in its issue of December 20, 1969, an article by Professor Hiren Mukerjee on "Stalin: A Plea for Revaluation". This has provoked a number of contributions, out of which two are given below: one by Dr P C. Gupta, Professor and Head of the Department of English, Allahabad University, and the other by Sri Sumit Sarkar, Lecturer in History, Postgraduate Department, Calcutta University. More contributions for this discussion are invited.

Appreciation, Not Adulation

P. C. GUPTA

I have read Prof Hiren Mukerjee's plea for a revaluation of Stalin's role in history with mixed feelings. I believe that history should be studied soberly, rationally and dispassionately.

It is not good history to present outstanding figures either as idealised heroes or unmitigated villains. The best of them have some faults and the worst of them have redeeming traits. To this extent I have sympathy with Prof Mukerjee's wistful references to Stalin.

It is not a sign of maturity to try to wipe out names of significant personalities from the pages of history. There was weight in the Chinese appraisal of Stalin made soon after the Twentieth Party Congress. They said that Stalin had followed a correct path up to 1935. After that he became arbitrary and tyrannical in his ways, whatever the reasons.

There are serious charges against the memory of Stalin. These should not be overlooked. It is said that he liquidated the majority of his opponents from the Polit Bureau and the Central Committee. He gave up the democratic norms prescribed by Lenin for the proper functioning of the Party.

No doubt, conditions were very difficult in the "Stalin Era", a phrase of Anna Louise Strong approvingly cited by Prof Mukerjee. Lenin had to function in even more difficult times, but he was a much more human figure and projected the image of Com-

munist much better. It was a much easier course which his successors had to follow.

With each decade and generation that passes, Communism should become more humane. Its strength increases and multiplies with the passage of time. After its triumph over one-third of the globe, it can afford to be less ruthless, though it should not lower its guard. This is clear from recent happenings in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. We recall with satisfaction Mayakovsky's tribute to Lenin as most "tender and humane" to his comrades.

It is not necessary to recall Mao and others in this context who speak in the same breath of "American imperialists, Soviet revisionists and Indian reactionaries". We may be in the second category of "revisionists, if not in the third, that is "Indian reactionaries". We recall with sorrow that the Chinese leadership with Mao at its head, tramples under its feet the pride and self-respect of weaker nations.

While avoiding any involvement, except verbal, with the most rapacious imperialism of today, it marches its armies against neighbours on issues that ought to be settled peacefully. We ought to declare firmly that it is impermissible for Communist states to wage war against weaker neighbours on flimsy grounds.

I certainly desire that Stalin's works should be made available

to readers all over the world. There is much good in them. I agree with Prof Mukerjee's references to *Problems of Leninism*. The weaknesses and shortcomings may be ruthlessly criticised. This is the way to grow intellectually and spiritually.

We should emphasise that there is no going back to Stalinism, that is, the ways and methods followed by him after 1935. Because of his actions, the image of Communism has suffered denigration. Cruelty and violence have become associated with this most human of creeds.

Violence and bloodshed are the inseparable concomitants of capitalism, more specially in its hour of decay. Communism is the most human and democratic creed of modern times, as it pursues steadfastly as its goal the happiness and prosperity of the toiling millions all over the world. Communism is truly international in its character and outlook and sets its face firmly against any attempt to humiliate weaker neighbours. The Chinese in this have been guilty of chauvinism at big-power mentality.

We should not glorify Stalin any more by observing his birthdays. We should evaluate his role in history critically, otherwise Communism will be burdened with many vestigial remnants of the past. The attempt to forget Stalin and deny any reference to him is not a serious approach to contemporary history.

Communists in the past had paid no heed to the criticism of Stalin by his enemies. They had tended to believe that if a poet wrote a good poem or a scientist made a great discovery, Stalin's genius was at the back of it. Similarly, the Chinese believe today that if a Chinese team climbs the Everest (a doubtful proposition), then the credit for it goes to the Thought of Mao.

It seems amazing that Communists, equipped with the most scientific philosophy discovered by mankind, should swallow such fatuous and infantile propositions. It resembles primitive

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What about His Victims ?

SUMIT SARKAR

PROFESSOR Hiren Mukherjee in his eloquent plea for "a principled revaluation of Stalin's place in history" **MAINSTREAM**, December 20, 1969) has very rightly condemned the practice of making "un-persons" of historical personalities, recalling in this context Lenin's "generosity of spirit" for comrades who had erred

It is all the more depressing, therefore, that Prof Mukherjee's "generosity" remains confined to Stalin, and that his method of reassessment at times seems to follow the not-unfamiliar line of quotations torn from their contexts

Lenin's "testament", Prof Mukherjee tells us, "found no political shortcoming in Stalin", his comments on Trotsky Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Bukharin were allegedly far more damaging. I quote here in full the relevant sentences, as given in the most recent Soviet text (V I Lenin, *Collected Works*, Volume 36, pp 594-596, Progress Publishers, Moscow 1966).

"Comrade Stalin, having become Secretary-General, has unlimited authority concentrated in his hands and I am not sure whether he will always be capable of using that authority with sufficient caution. Comrade Trotsky, on the other hand, as his struggle against the CC on the question of the People's Commissariat for Communications has already proved, is distinguished not only by outstanding ability. He is personally perhaps the most capable man in the present CC, but he has displayed excessive self-assurance and shown excessive preoccupation with the purely administrative side of the work. These two qualities of the two outstanding leaders of the present CC can inadvertently lead to a split, and if our party does not take steps to avert this, the split may come unexpectedly the October episode with Zinoviev

and Kamenev was of course no accident, but neither can the blame for it be laid upon them personally, any more than non-Bolshevism can upon Trotsky. Bukharin is not only a most valuable and major theorist of the party, he is also rightly considered the favourite of the whole party, but his theoretical views can be classified as fully Marxist only with great reserve, for there is something scholastic about him (he has never made a study of dialectics, and I think, never fully understood it)" (December 24, 1922)

"Stalin is too rude and this defect, although quite tolerable in our midst and in dealings among us Communists, becomes intolerable in a Secretary-General. That is why I suggest that the comrades think about a way of removing Stalin from that post and appointing another man in his stead who in all other respects differs from Comrade Stalin in having only one advantage, namely, that of being more tolerant, more loyal, more polite, and more considerate to the comrades, less capricious etc" (January 4, 1923)

One would like to know the source for the alleged description of Zinoviev and Kamenev as "hole and corner politicians"—and the reader may well ask whether Prof Mukherjee's summary (Trotsky as "not a Bolshevik", Bukharin as "a scholastic, not a Marxist") does anything like justice to Lenin's penetrating analysis of his colleagues

The most remarkable thing about the "testament," however, is the sudden hardening in Lenin's attitude towards Stalin between December 24 and January 4. The detailed account of these eleven days by the "talented" Issac Deutscher (*The Prophet Unarmed*, pp 69-72) could have been disregarded but for the publication in 1956 of Lenin's notes on "the Question of Nationalities or Autonomisation" (*Collected*

Works, Volume 36, pp 605-611). Dictated on December 30-31, 1922, these notes are a bitter indictment of Stalin's handling of the Georgian Question—surely a "political shortcoming", one would think. In place of the "wonderful Georgian" we now read about "The Georgian who carelessly flings about accusations of 'nationalist socialism' (whereas he himself is a real and true 'nationalist-socialist', and even a vulgar Great-Russian bully)", there is the explicit statement that "the political responsibility for all this truly Great Russian nationalist campaign must, of course, be laid on Stalin and Dzeizhinsky", their conduct is condemned as "unpardonable opportunism". The "testament" and the notes were indeed placed before the Thirteenth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, but they were not published inside the USSR till 1956, being excluded from Lenin's "collected" works no doubt at the behest of his "faithful disciple"

A ninetieth anniversary certainly deserves commemoration, and Prof Mukherjee is on very strong ground when he calls for a more balanced assessment of Stalin than given in the undoubtedly somewhat hysterical "secret speech"

But 1879 was the birth-year of Trotsky, too—yet Prof Mukherjee seems quite unworried by the fact that Trotsky's name "continues to be anathema in the Soviet Union", and he even repeats for our benefit some of the oft-quoted Lenin epithets of the August Bloc controversy days.

But Trotsky surely deserves to be remembered, not just as the "Judas" of 1911-1912, the tactless negotiator of Brest-Litovsk, or the exiled and embittered critic of the 1930s—but also as the moving spirit of the St Petersburg Soviet of 1905, the author of the *Itogi, Perspektivi* (1906) which so startlingly anticipated much of the April Theses line, the Chairman of the Military Revolutionary Committee which carried out the actual seizure of power in 1917, and Lenin's second-in-command

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UP: SHIFTING ALLIANCES (Continued from page 11)

group, which it did in the second week, interestingly provided adequate manoeuvring span to Smt Gandhi's group. One can just imagine, had Sri Gupta called the Assembly, say, just after the exit of Smt Gandhi's supporters, and had the BKD kept its options open, he might have survived, even with 139 as against 85 of Smt Gandhi's group, and would have dealt a deadly blow to the defectors. But he missed an opportunity that is unlikely to return.

Now the position is again reversing, and it appears, that the remaining one and a half month's time is likely to favour Sri Gupta.

Students of social psychology and modern political history are familiar with the functional role propaganda and rumours can play in actual hot or cold wars, in deciding the fortunes of political parties and their leaders. For Indian people, these are a new phenomena, who share the naive belief that in the long run, truth alone triumphs. But, we may join Keynes, "In the long run we are all dead." We, as yet, have neither witnessed nor appreciated the formidable power of propaganda and rumours in politics.

In the present UP crisis, both of these have played a vital role. The propaganda offensive of Smt Gandhi's supporters against the Gupta Government is likely to effectively undermine even the otherwise dubious prestige, which Sri Gupta and his colleagues enjoyed. Mass opinion is being manufactured, it is being successfully worked up on either sides, against Sri Gupta and Smt Gandhi, which, besides other factors, is having its impact.

Sri Gupta, despite his long press statements and popular promises, is incapable of confronting the crowds. Apart from the image handicap, he is no match for Smt Gandhi, or even Sri Charan Singh.

This not only allows lesser scope for the Gupta group, but also seriously demoralises the typical, timid and spineless UP legislator who is ever inclined to choose the path of least resistance. Hence

the vulnerability of the Gupta group. It is rather too late for the Gupta Government to refurbish its image.

Table III gives a rough estimate of the popularity, prestige and reputation, as in the third week of December, enjoyed by the four leaders who matter in the present power struggle.

TABLE III
POPULARITY SCORE OF UP LEADERS
(Multiple Responses)

	Gupta group %	Tripathi group %	BKD %	All MLA %	Rural %	Public Urban %
Gupta	100	10	0	35	5	10
Tripathi	5	15	5	8	5	5
Bahuguna	5	25	15	15	5	5
Charan Singh	45	60	100	68	90	95
Base	20	20	20	60	20	60

The popularity score is a reliable index of the comparative acceptance of the four contenders. The acceptance of Sri Gupta, Sri Tripathi, Sri Bahuguna and Sri

Charan Singh is: 35 per cent, 8 per cent, 15 per cent and 68 per cent for all the MLAs.

It is not far-fetched to suggest, in the event of an election, the Tripathi-Bahuguna leadership will not be able to deliver the goods. It is only the image and reputation of Sri Charan Singh which can ensure her victory at the Centre.

Once UP is conceded as BKD's sphere of influence, Smt Gandhi can be assured of its support at the centre. But should it be at the cost of policy?

P. C. GUPTA (Continued from page 32)

totem worship rather than a scientific outlook on life.

We must not ignore today the criticism of Stalin made by his erstwhile comrades and followers. We cannot seriously maintain that Stalin had done nothing good. If we were to follow the logic of this approach fully, we shall also have to accept that Trotsky, Bukharin and even M N Roy had done good in their time and so deserve honourable mention in history.

But we shall not observe their birthdays. We shall celebrate the birthdays of heroes and martyrs like Dimitrov, Rosa Luxemburg, Thaelmann, Fucik and others like them. Do we not tend to forget them?

We should not create the impression that we are giving an alibi to the misdeeds of Stalin—to the wanton killing of comrades and innocent citizens, to all the violence of which Stalin seems to have been guilty. If there are any doubts about all this, certainly these doubts should be ventilated and discussed.

There is weight in Prof

Mukerjee's evaluation of the contribution of Stalin in building up Socialism in the Soviet Land and in defending its gains against Hitler. But he seems to play down the violent methods adopted by Stalin in dealing with those who differed from him and eliminating them physically. There seems to have been fear and terror at home among common citizens. Democratic norms laid down by the Party were flouted. Soviet legality was violated. Are we to keep mum about this? Is this the image of Communism that can be projected? This cannot be ignored in any detached evaluation.

We cannot present Stalin to the world today as a model of Communist greatness. We can present him in the image of a "lost leader" at best.—We ought to project a different image of Communist greatness, nearer to what has been and much nearer to the heart's desire. We cannot subscribe to the glorification and deification of Stalin which had gone on in "the Stalin Era" which luckily has ended.

NAGALAND : ITS PLACE IN INDIA (Continued from page 12)

"authority" could develop among them

Though "agreements" were made by the British from time to time with certain chiefs, for example, the Konyak, the latter were never recognised as heading any state-power. An appreciation of this fact is essential for the correct estimation of what has now become the Naga political problem

The Treaty of Yandabo, 1826, made the King of Ava renounce all claims upon and future interference with "the principality of Assam and its dependencies, and also the contiguous petty States of Manipur and Cachar" (Article 2) The Treaty did not outline the boundary between Assam and Burma, but all the later British writers assert that Burma acquiesced in the watershed of Patkoi range

C U Acthison, in his introductory note on Assam, writes, "The Naga country up to the Patkoi range is nominally British territory by inheritance from the rulers of Assam, and was recognised as such in treaties with Burma"

British Jurisdiction

Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858, that assured the territories of the native Princes, did not mention the so-called "tribal tracts" spread all over India and till them mostly beyond the pale of effective administration.

As late as 1866, in the midst of the official controversy over the policy of extending control over the Nagas, Cecil Beadon made the significant formulation that no Naga territory up to the Patkoi ranges was really free The General Clauses Act of 1868 first defined "British India" as "the territory for the time being vested in Her Majesty" by the 1858 statute.

British administration moved into the Naga area through the extension of the Garo Hills Act of 1869. After the enactment of the Code of Criminal Procedure (Act X of 1872) the first "Foreign Jurisdiction and Extradition Act" (Act XI of 1872) was passed to

enforce it "within diverse places beyond the limits of British India", wherein "by treaty, capitulation, agreement, grant, usage, sufferance and other lawful means the Governor-General-in Council has power and jurisdiction". (Preface to Act XI, emphasis added)

It is to be made clear that none of the Foreign Jurisdiction Acts and Orders, passed thereafter, defined the source of such power and authority, but only sought to lay down the norms of the exercise of the power, assumed to be vested in the Governor-General. Indeed the exercise of such authority was expanded gradually in its application and quantum

It was the Interpretation Act, 1889, which first defined "India" as "British India together with any territories of any native Prince or Chief under the suzerainty of Her Majesty". The Foreign Jurisdiction Act, 1890, superseded the Foreign Jurisdiction and Extradition Act of 1879, which had superseded the Act of the same name of 1872

In 1902, a Foreign Jurisdiction Order in Council was passed in the Court at "Buckingham Palace (on June 13), "by virtue of and in exercise of the powers by the Foreign Jurisdiction Act, 1890, or otherwise, in His Majesty vested"

The scope of this Order, according to Ilbert, was "very wide" and covered the "trans-border tribes". It did not prevent, however, the bringing of any area, inhabited by them, for example, the "Melomi-Primi" area (in 1927), under British administration

Tribal Areas

The Phrase "tribal areas" was invented by the Government of India Act, 1935, which defined them as "the areas along the frontiers of India or in Baluchistan which are not part of British India or of Burma or of any Indian State or of any foreign State (Section 311[1]).

India was defined in the same Section as "British India together

with all territories of any Indian Ruler under the Suzerainty of His Majesty, all territories under the suzerainty of such an Indian Ruler, the tribal area, and, any other territories which His Majesty in Council may, from time to time...declare to be part of India". The jurisdiction of His Majesty over the whole of "India" admits of no doubt or exception in the 1935 Act.

Yet, whereas Section 294 provided for the relation between the Governments of British India and Indian States being conducted by the Foreign Jurisdiction Act of 1890, Section 8(1/e) of the same Act brought the "tribal areas" under complete executive authority of the federation, discharged by the Governor-General, according to Section 11(1) in his discretion

Constitutional Integration

The Governor-General might be advised, in this respect, according to Sub-section 2 of the same Section, by a counsellor and might delegate the power, according to Section 123(1) to a Provincial Governor, who, as the agent of the Governor-General, would be acting in his discretion. The constitutional integration of the "tribal areas", with British India, was complete, though its special status was recognised

A revised Foreign Jurisdiction Order in Council of the King, dated March 18, 1937, excluded the "tribal areas in India" from the scope of foreign Jurisdiction "without prejudice, however, to the validity of anything previously done thereunder"

A notification of the Government of India's External Affairs Department (No. 1-x), dated April 1, 1937, directed the Governor of Assam to discharge, as the agent of the Governor-General of India in Council "in and in relation to the tribal areas beyond the external boundaries of the province of Assam all functions hitherto discharged in and in relation to the said area by the said Governor as the agent of the Governor-General in respect of the political control of the

transborder tribes, the administration of the Assam Rifles and the Armed Civil Forces”.

It is necessary to make here a reference to the phrase “political control” One year before the constitution of Assam into a Chief Commissioner’s Province, the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873, provided for the drawing of the Inner Line, to define, according to Mackenzie, “merely” the jurisdiction and not “the sovereignty beyond” “The active control of the district officer need not necessarily extend up to the boundary, but it must under no circumstances be carried further”

Up to 1882, when the Naga hills district was formed, the Inner Line, however, had encircled only the Himalayan foot-hills and the eastern Naga territories which strengthens the inference that the expansion of administration was never ruled out by the Inner Line

Beyond the administered area the British created a zone of “political control” dating back at least to 1866 In the later years, the area of political control progressively shifted to the inner hills as the horizons of administration expanded step by step

In 1890, for the first time, administration reached Mokochung, across the Inner Line Still later, the Inner Line was broadened to cover almost the entire Naga area Beyond the area of “political control” the “unadministered” area was ever shrinking.

The Second World War appears to have finally inspired a full-scale “forward policy” on the tribal areas, as, on October 23, 1943, the services of J P Mills, till then Secretary to the Governor, were placed “at the disposal of the Government of India for employment as Adviser for Tribal Areas and States to His Excellency the Governor of Assam”

The transfer of power led to the abolition of the special constitutional status of the tribal areas as the India (Provisional Constitution) Order of August 15, 1947, altogether dropped all references to “tribal areas”, discretionary powers of Governor-General and Governors, and distinction between “India” and British India.

The repeals, however, at once put their link with India on a doubtful footing On August 27, 1947, the Governor-General issued the Extra-Provincial Jurisdiction Ordinance, with effect from August 15, 1947

But it was not until the end of October, that the Assam Tribal Areas Order, 1947, was issued by the Central Government, indeed with retrospective effect, calling the tribal areas on the frontiers of the Province of Assam as “Assam Tribal Areas” (Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, Notification No 387 NEF, Gazette of India, Part I, October 30, 1947)

Another notification was issued by the same Department delegating the executive powers of the Central Government to the Government of Assam, according to Section 124 (1) as adopted by the India Provisional Constitution Order, 1947 (Notification No 388 NEF) Before the end of the year the Ordinance turned into an Act

The new Constitution described the Assam tribal areas, along with the Khasi States as part of the territory of Assam (Schedule 1) In the new set-up the Naga Tribal Area was declared as a Part B Tribal Area, to be ad-

ministered by the President of India, through the Governor of Assam, acting as the former’s agent and in the latter’s discretion, and the Naga Hills District a Part A Tribal Area

The following developments in the Naga hills took a really political turn The Autonomous District Council was rejected by the District In December 1957, the Naga Hills Tuensang Area was created as a part B Tribal Area, within Assam By the Nagaland (Transitional Provisions) Regulation, 1961, the NHTA was called Nagaland and granted an interim administration with an interim body and an Executive Council

Constitutionally, however, it still remained the NHTA, a Part B Tribal Area within Assam, as no amendment of the Sixth Schedule took place The Interim arrangement was intended to work for three years, since February 1961, when it was enforced

In August 1962, Parliament completed the legislation to constitute Nagaland into a State The State was born on December 1, 1963 But what place it will finally take in the Indian constitutional edifice is, possibly, yet to be determined

Sumit Sarkar (Continued from page 33)

throughout the crucial 1917-1922 period

Stalin’s role in the Anti-Fascist War has been unfairly denigrated, argues Prof Mukerjee, very justly—but surely the Soviet Republic’s first Commissar of War may be allowed just a little credit, too, for the creation of the Red Army and the winning of the Civil War? And can one be quite so sure, after the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party and the researches of E H Carr and Deutscher, that the Zinoviev-Kamenev or Bukharin oppositions were merely “defeatist and disruptive”?

Prof Mukerjee has rightly drawn attention to some of the inadequacies and crudities of the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party debunking of Stalin. Precisely for

that reason, this “landmark in the advance of socialism” cannot become a permanent—and complacent—resting-place, one can either go forward from it, along the lines of a deeper probing of the phenomena of cultural formation and bureaucratisation, or backwards, in the august company of the CPI (Marxists) and other steadfast admirers of Stalin who at least have the virtue of being consistent.

Prof Mukerjee’s article, reference to Togliatti notwithstanding, offers little guidance along the first road A call for generosity loses much of its flavour if it is allowed to embrace only the executioner and never his victims; and a revaluation limited to Stalin alone might even arouse uncharitable suspicions about a tacking to the latest, post-August 1968 wind from Moscow.

MAINSTREAM

Subhas—The Tragic Hero

SUBRATA BANERJEE

PEOPLE everywhere seek a hero as the symbol of their aspirations. For the essentially romantic and emotional Bengalee, none could have fitted the role better in recent times than Subhas Chandra Bose.

He had a touch of the mystic. He was a restless romantic, incorrigible idealist, ardent nationalist and, above all, a rebel. He seemed to represent all the compulsive impulses of the Bengalee *bhadralok*.

No wonder he has become a legend that cannot be allowed to die. His admirers discover him at the ripe old age of 72 at the head of a liberation army in Sinkiang, in a Soviet prison, in some Himalayan cave, among strange sadhus, and even in the person of Mao Tse-tung. There is a persistent refusal to accept his death in an air crash on August 18, 1945.

It was his involvement with the student disturbances against the behaviour of Prof Oaten in the Presidency College, Calcutta, that really set Subhas on his political career. As he himself put it, this "foretaste of leadership" and "the consequent expulsion from the college made my future career."

Remarkable Man

It is this career that N G Jog has so sympathetically and yet critically analysed in his recent biography of Subhas *In Freedom's Quest*. He successfully weaves the story of the life of this remarkable man into the texture of our struggle for freedom.

In the process, he revives many old memories and throws

fresh light on many historic incidents. The most interesting feature of the book is the penetrating analysis of Subhas's relationship with Gandhiji and Jawaharlal.

The first person Subhas met on his return from England after spurning the Indian Civil Service was Gandhiji. The Mahatma's plans for the attainment of Swaraj did not quite convince the young hopeful.

Initial Resistance

This initial resistance was further strengthened by his association with Chittaranjan Das, who was then challenging Gandhiji's leadership. Jog characterises Subhas's relationship with Gandhiji as a love-hate relationship. Subhas, however, was never really under his influence.

Immediately after Subhas made his debut on the national political scene as one of the General Secretaries of the Congress in 1927, he sharply criticised Gandhian methods and attitudes. The only time when he really admired Gandhiji was at the time of the salt satyagraha. He was sorely disappointed with the Gandhi-Irwin pact.

Gandhiji, however, supported Subhas's election as the President of the Indian National Congress in 1938. It was probably a shrewd move to bring the stormy petrel under his control. Unfortunately, Subhas was not Jawaharlal.

Next year, Subhas stood for re-election against the advice of Gandhiji who even raised the bogey of "red ruin". Subhas won, and Gandhiji advised, "Those, therefore, who feel uncomfortable in being in the

Congress, may come out of it."

The saint hounded the rebel out of the Congress. Jog rightly characterises it as "non-violent liquidation at its smoothest". I was present as a student volunteer at the Calcutta AICC session when Subhas ultimately resigned.

The saint sat spinning away silently at Sodepur, a few miles outside the city. His allies moved like puppets manipulated by khadi strings. Jawaharlal and Sarojini Naidu were obviously embarrassed. For Subhas this was his glorious hour. The dignity with which he handled the situation put his opponents to shame.

Unfortunately, Subhas failed to follow up the prestige that he gained by unifying the Left forces and providing an alternative leadership. He became more and more bitter. This was the background to his escape from the country in search of foreign help for the Indian struggle. It was a romantic and heroic effort. At that historical moment it was a desperate action, doomed to failure.

Discussing Subhas's relationship with Jawaharlal, Jog feels that there was an element of jealousy involved. They both came to the forefront of national politics about the same time as General Secretaries of the Congress in 1927. Gandhiji made Jawaharlal the Congress President two years later. Subhas had his chance only after Jawaharlal had been President three times.

Sharp Conflict

Both were the darling of the youth and accepted leaders of the Left. Bose recognised Nehru's superiority as a theoretician, but was critical of his frequent surrender to Gandhiji. Nehru admitted the sincerity of his younger colleague, but was critical of his impetuosity.

The correspondence between the two that Jog quotes really reveals something of a love-hate relationship. The conflict between the two came sharply to the fore when Jawaharlal failed to join forces with Subhas in opposition to Gandhiji at the time of the Tripuri Congress and after

It may be a matter of speculation, but there is good reason to believe that the two together could have probably changed the direction of the national movement at that crucial hour.

Throughout the interesting study, Jog is caught in the web of contrary pulls of his sincere admiration of Gandhiji, Jawaharlal and Subhas. He is often critical of Subhas's motivations and actions in relation to two other personalities, and rightly so

Pathetic Picture

Discussing Subhas's experiences in Germany, Jog clearly indicates that the Nazis really utilised him for anti-allies propaganda. Coming to the INA Jog objectively analyses Mohan Singh's role and regrets Subhas's inability to find any use for such an independent-minded person. One wonders, was Subhas afraid that Mohan Singh would be too hot to handle during the inevitable diplomatic compromises with the Japanese?

Jog presents a pathetic picture of Subhas trying to hold the INA together after the debacle at Imphal. As a final effort he even tried to appeal to the Americans in a broadcast speech to sympathise with his motivations and sought ways and means of approaching the Soviet Union.

It is difficult, however, to agree with Jog that while Tokyo offered Subhas full cooperation, the local commanders let him down and the battle of Imphal ended in disaster because of the "unimaginative" strategy of the Japanese General Saito.

Both the Arakan and Imphal battles were in the nature of defensive operations as far as the Japanese were concerned. They were only meant to delay the inevitable British counter-offensive in Burma.

Jog admits that, after the fall of Stalingrad and the failure of the Quit India movement, Subhas's time-table was all wrong. It was indeed a desperate effort. "Probably, he thought, now or never", as Jog puts it. The concluding section of the biography reads like a Greek tragedy, with Subhas heading towards

inevitable ruin. The air crash was a crowning act of fate.

Before giving his estimate of Subhas as a man and the leader, Jog answers the question that has often been raised: Was Bose a fascist? What emerges from the analytical study of his political views is the typical middle-class admiration of heroes and ideological confusion.

Subhas's association with the working-class and youth movements in the late twenties and early thirties gave a vague socialist edge to his views. On the other hand, his contacts with the Nazi and Fascist leaders in the early thirties made him an admirer of dictatorship of a party with a military discipline. He even formulated an ideology of a synthesis between communism and fascism.

It was on the eve of the Second World War that he somewhat modified his views. Nevertheless, he did believe that "success of the Axis powers was now firmly equated with India's deliverance from British imperialism". He also advised his followers, "Do not be carried away by ideological considerations".

This lack of ideological clarity was really the root cause of much of Subhas's mistakes. This is a point that Jog fails to see in his subjective summing up of Subhas's career and motivations. Jog, however, rightly points out that Subhas really never got rid of the fascination for mysticism. In this he was encouraged by the adulation he received from his compatriots.

Wonderful Example

This was probably the reason why he was so secretive about his marriage. It would have tarnished his image of a dedicated revolutionary. To the Bengalee *bhadralok*, the greatest sacrifice a political leader can make is not to marry. Subhas had to live up to it.

Subhas was certainly very non-communal and his organisation of the INA was a wonderful example of national integration. The Subhas I had seen in my student days was, however, very different from the Subhas I saw

in the INA documentary films captured in Saigon.

As Jog puts it, "He seems to have undergone a metamorphosis as a speaker in Germany and in South East Asia". This was indeed one of the outward manifestations of the transformation of Subhas Babu into Netaji. Jog's assessment of the Netaji seems somewhat sentimental and subjective. He presents the picture of a man in a hurry, a desperate hurry.

He praises Subhas's diplomatic handling of the Japanese, which often meant shutting his eyes to incidents like the massacre of Indian labourers on the Bangkok-moulmien Death Railway. I also remember Aung San expressing his deep disappointment to me that the INA did not join the revolt against the Japanese.

Jog assesses Subhas's achievements finally on the basis of the "legacy some of his foremost contemporaries would have left" if they had died at the age of 48. He admits that this is "a rather far-fetched and unrealistic comparison", nevertheless it is certainly some measure of Subhas's achievement.

Ardent Nationalist

The picture that ultimately emerges is that of an ardent nationalist who staked his all to win freedom for his country. That he failed was really due to the fact that he never really grew up while he was in India. He always remained the spoilt darling of the Bengalee *bhadralok*.

His experiences with the Nazis and the Japanese militarists matured him politically. But then it was too late. I have a feeling that he was very much aware of the unfortunate situation he was in, but by then he had fallen a victim to his own plans. He had to go on, knowing full well that victory could not be his. This was the tragedy of his life.

Subhas's greatest achievement was the permanent place he carved for himself in the hearts of his people as the symbol of militant nationalism and anti-imperialism. Subhas was indeed one of the tragic heroes of the drama that was Indian struggle for freedom.

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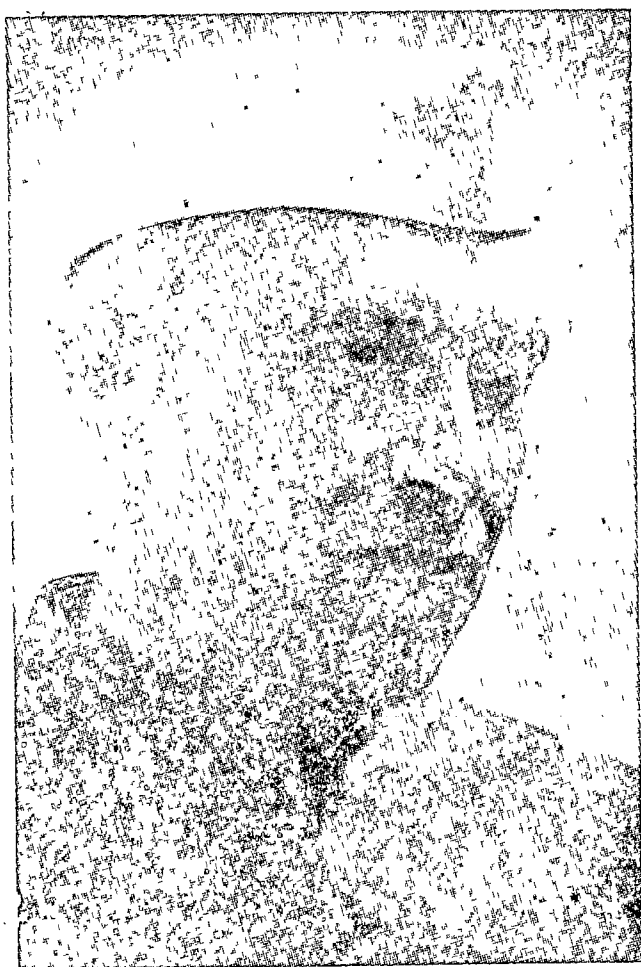
CONGRESS

Hazards of Radicalism

JANA SANGH

Posture and Perspective

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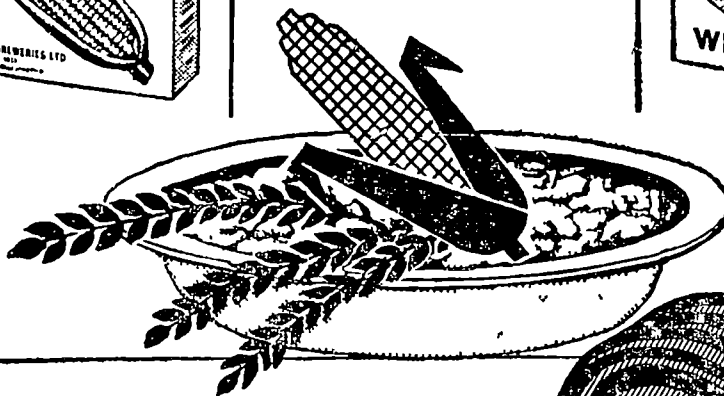
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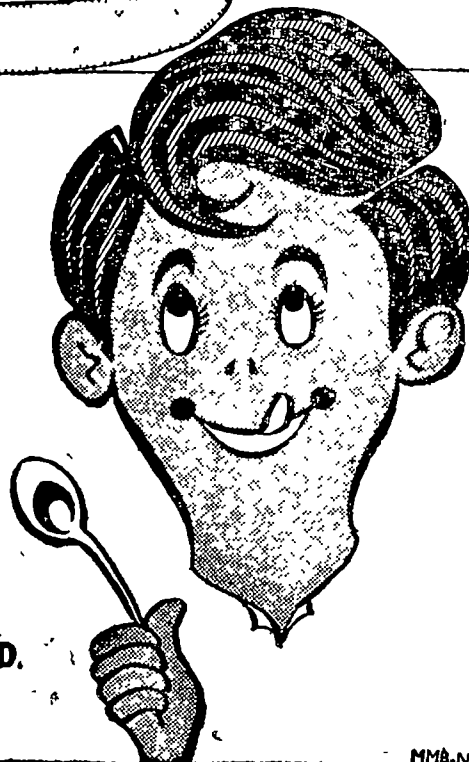
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For Clear Stand on Vietnam

THE warm reception accorded in different parts of India to the delegation of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam is proof of our people's sympathy and support for the determined struggle the people of that country are waging against American aggression. Such support is hardly surprising, considering our own background of anti-imperialist struggle over decades and our principled backing during the years of freedom of national liberation battles in different parts of the world. History and tradition have placed India squarely in the camp of anti-imperialism and genuine democracy, and the affinity between us and the people of Vietnam is the result of this historical development.

But the Government's attitude has not always truly reflected popular feeling on this question, for throughout the pressure of the Western lobby has been immense. In the earlier stages, when Jawaharlal Nehru was alive, India took on what was conceived as a constructive role in settling the problems of Vietnam in accordance with the wishes of its people, even our participation in the work of the International Control Commission at that time only reflected this approach. Since then, however, the ICC has proved almost totally futile, and it has not been found possible for international opinion to assert itself sufficiently to end the aggression and ensure the withdrawal of American and satellite troops from the soil of Vietnam, leaving the Vietnamese people to shape their government and their destiny according to their own lights.

Despite the talks at Paris and the token withdrawal of ground troops, the US Administration has given every indication that it has no intention of vacating aggression. The My Lai and Song My massacres of innocent men, women and children, though brought to world notice quite belatedly, have helped to underline the vicious nature of American aggression in that part of Asia. The so-called Vietnamization of the dirty war has been exposed as no more than the new version of the old Dullesian device to make Asians kill Asians while the US armed forces keep the puppet regime in Saigon alive. It is clear that so long as American military presence in Vietnam is maintained the threat to Asian peace and security remains.

It is in this context that it becomes urgent for India to define its attitude to the people of Vietnam, particularly South Vietnam, absolutely clear. The

NLF controls the overwhelming bulk of South Vietnamese territory and the vast majority of the people of that territory owe allegiance to it. Under its aegis has been set up the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam. The puppet clique in Saigon controls only a small part of the territory with the help of American troops and weapons, and even this control is nominal. The demand for a coalition government has been gaining ground even in the areas yet to be liberated. Thus it is clear that the only genuine government in South Vietnam is the Provisional Revolutionary Government. It is natural in the circumstances that the PRG should have been promptly recognized by a large number of countries.

New Delhi's hesitation in this regard is difficult to understand. There is an attempt in some quarters to put forward the theory of "neutrality" as between the PRG and the Saigon puppets. Nothing can be more absurd. India is committed to supporting genuine popular regimes, it is committed moreover to backing people's struggles for liberation everywhere. The PRG of South Vietnam is logically the one that New Delhi has to deal with. The atmosphere necessary for announcing the decision

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NEW DELHI SKYLINE

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EDITOR . Nikhil Chakravartty

Views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and not necessarily of this journal

to recognize the PRG and establish diplomatic relations with it has been created by the NLF delegation's visit straight from the battlefields of South Vietnam. There can be no justification for any further vacillation or delay. There can be no neutrality as between an aggressor and the defenders of national freedom the logic of our support for the Arabs is equally valid in Vietnam.

Without further delay the Government of India

should announce both the recognition of the PRG in South Vietnam and the elevation of our representation at Hanoi to embassy level as promised by our Foreign Minister at the time of President Ho Chi Minh's funeral

Foreign policy cannot be effectively shaped on the basis of acquiescence with the Western lobby in any form; this is the truth New Delhi has to understand and act upon.

New Delhi Skyline

Congress: Hazards of Radicalism

A peculiar unevenness has gripped the politics of this country. Lines are not clear-cut even after the two Congress sessions at Ahmedabad and Bombay.

Although the Rightist content of the Syndicate Congress is unmistakable, its efforts so far have been to present before the public a posture of radicalism. The latest resolution of the Syndicate Working Committee on economic and social policy has a veneer of radicalism which can hardly be ignored in terms of its mass appeal. The demand for a massive programme to combat unemployment may not in the long run look as attractive as it is being presented today, at the same time its immediate impact on a considerable section of the public has been that the Syndicate may not be as reactionary as is being made out by its opponents. The fact that its posture is quite uninhibited by any compulsion of the responsibility of power may not immediately be seen through by the public in general.

It is obvious that this posture of the Syndicate is dictated by the anxiety that it may have to face the challenge of a mid-term parliamentary poll. It is therefore all the more significant to note that in facing the electorate the Syndicate leadership has made up its mind not to appear before the public as the unbending champion

of free enterprise. It will try to claim that it is only carrying forward the policy and the mandate of the old Congress whose successor it claims to be.

However, the same overriding anxiety to get ready for the eventuality of a mid-term poll has made it think in terms of a coalition with like-minded parties. In this respect Sri Morarji Desai has in a characteristic manner blurted out the Syndicate's plan of alliance with the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra when faced by the press at Ahmedabad. This has caused embarrassment for the Syndicate High Command. Although it had decided even before Ahmedabad to bring about a United Front with the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra—and carefully translated this strategy in the resolutions and keynote speeches at Ahmedabad itself—it is at the moment not very anxious to project itself as an out-and-out Rightist party.

The Syndicate leaders surveying the situation after Ahmedabad have found that a large body of Left opinion may not line up with Smt Indira Gandhi. In this respect, the SSP stance has been of considerable help to the Syndicate. From the Syndicate circles in the Capital, one gets the impression that they are attaching great importance to the SSP conference at Sonepur this week, whether Sri S. M. Joshi is trounced or not.

As regards CPM, the Syndicate's strategy is not very unclear: it would try to exploit to the maximum the CPM's over-radical ideological stand as well as its current alienation from many of its United Front partners. In this context the Syndicate would on the one hand plug the line that Smt Gandhi is not radical enough for the CPM to support her, and on the other, hold out the olive branch in the hour of its isolation that the CPM could depend for Syndicate's support. While the CPM leaders themselves in their latest Politbureau stand have repudiated any suggestion of support to any coalition of the Right Teenmurti composed of the Syndicate, the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra, the Syndicate's calculation is that *quid-pro-quo* relationship could be established from time to time with the CPM in its present angry mood, for instance, the Syndicate will certainly not rule out that a friendly or neutral gesture towards the CPM particularly in Kerala and West Bengal may help it to get CPM's support—or at least neutrality—on specific issues of confrontation with Smt Gandhi's Government in Parliament. It is in this background that the Syndicate Working Committee last week did not yield to the temptation of thundering against Smt Gandhi's Government for having allowed,

what it regards, as Communist violence to go on unabated in West Bengal, with an astute sense of political reality Sri Atulya Ghosh prevented such a resolution being passed. It is with the same consideration in mind that the Syndicate has taken a posture of total opposition to the Achutha Menon Ministry in Kerala. It is no accident that there has been no forthright Syndicate denunciation of the attempt on the life of the Kerala Home Minister, an occasion which a party committed so blatantly to anti-Communism would be expected to capitalise. Political observers cannot help getting the impression that the present Syndicate crusade against Communism is discreetly reluctant in attacking the CPM, while it is banking on the assumption that its strong denunciation of Moscow might not antagonise the CPM leadership. The rift in the Communist camp is being exploited to the full by the Syndicate.

It is the same anxiety to seek political respectability and not to be branded as a thoroughbred Rightist party that was noticeable at the recent Jana Sangh session in Patna. The deliberate isolation of Sri Balraj Madhok and the presentation of an economic policy resolution with its studied enlightened veneer—so characteristic of Sri Vajpayee's politics—are significant pointers. It is no accident that even the Swatantra's duly elected chief, Sri Masani, has started talking of socialism.

THIS competition in radicalism has both its positive and negative aspects. For one thing, it is an index of the radicalisation of the masses in this country that frankly Right-wing parties find it difficult to sell their wares with their authentic labels. Hence their hurry to put on a radical mantle. The General Election of 1967 and the mid-term poll of 1969 helped them to understand the new reality. The upsurge of popular enthusiasm following bank nationalisation has shown them the way the wind is blowing and so now they are busy trimming their sails accordingly.

The danger in such a gamble is not difficult to discern, as could be seen in Sri C. B. Gupta's dramatic abolition of land revenue. It is no doubt a tit-for-tat move to twit Smt Gandhi's supporters clamouring for the nationalisation of sugar mills only in UP, while it is expected to stand the Syndicate in good stead in the countryside in the event of a mid-term poll. Side by side, it is meant to be a shot in the arm for Sri Raj Naram fighting Sri Gupta's battle inside the SSP.

It is not that Sri C. B. Gupta is unaware of the serious implications of this move for the State exchequer in the present set-up, particularly when he knows that he cannot afford to impose any compensatory agricultural income-tax which will antagonise his rich peasant supporters. But he has taken this after-me-the-deluge stand to meet his immediate desperate need to gain allies to save his tottering Ministry and to project the image of Syndicate Congress as being as radical as Smt Gandhi's, if not more.

This temptation to play radical in words and resolutions is very marked in Smt Gandhi's camp as well. After the bank nationalisation, expectations ran high that she would announce a whole series of sensationally Left measures during the winter session of the Lok Sabha. When that did not come off, speculation ran high that the Delhi AICC would provide the platform for some spectacular radicalism. Disappointment at Delhi was followed by expectations in Bombay.

But in Bombay, the only stress from the leadership was on the implementation of a very modest economic programme. This did not generate the expected enthusiasm for which two chronic features of Congress functioning is responsible. In the last twenty years, the conspicuous neglect in implementing many of the well-meaning resolutions has bred such an extraordinary degree of smug cynicism in the Congress ranks that it will take time before the Government can effectively prove its bona fides on this score.

Secondly, the Congress hierarchy has taken to the habit of

only mouthing catch slogans and making pompous promises before the masses, with the result that it can think of only some spectacular Government measures alone to help it to retrieve its lost position among the electorate. Even after the split in the Congress, when all the ailments of the Congress organisation are being laid at the door of the Syndicate, there is little evidence of any serious effort to reshape the party as an instrument of social change. To any outsider, perhaps the most surprising feature of the Bombay Congress was the almost total lack of comprehension of the political imperative of party functioning among the masses. Except for Sri Chavan's exhortation in the panel discussion on the Political Resolution, there was not a single case of leaders stressing mass activity in the sense identification of the Congress ranks with the day-to-day struggles of the masses. The fact that the agrarian programme of the Bombay Congress can be effectively implemented only if the party ranks go in for mass action—as have the Left parties in implementing accepted land reforms in West Bengal and Kerala—is totally missing from the consciousness of the leadership of the Congress.

The upshot of it all is that a new craze for radical paper programmes has come up in Indian politics, while true radicalism can be brought about only by political action, setting the masses in motion. What is missing in the consciousness of the Congress leadership is that the masses are not set in motion only by their mobilisation in grand rallies addressed by Smt Gandhi. Crowds at meetings are at best an index of heightened political awareness of the public and do not by themselves lead to mass action for the effective implementation of policies unless and until there is organised political effort to lead them on to battle. The fight for social change, not to speak of socialism, can hardly be waged without such a political party in action.

In the absence of such an understanding of its role, Smt Gandhi's camp finds itself in a

strange quandary. Her success in winning mass support through bank nationalisation has encouraged her adversaries to take up radical postures, while inside her camp, there is an almost irrepressible urge to beat the others in her game of making extravagant counter-promises, which as a party running the Government at the Centre, it is not in a position to fulfil. To whet the appetite for radicalisation, the temptation to go in for a spate of nationalisation measures, is understandable; but its feasibility under the present set-up may be as brittle as President Soekarno's socialism.

●

THUS, the new challenge of the Syndicate and its desperate bid not only to press for radical demands but also to recruit the support of some sections of the Left, presents Smt Gandhi's camp with a perspective that is almost nerve-racking. The euphoria is over, instead has come an alert and expectant public opinion which is closely watching every step of her Government.

This was evident this week in the Capital from the adverse reactions to the Government decision to let the Birlas set up their fertilizer plant in Goa. Although the formal decision on the project was expected quite some time ago, the fact that it came on the very morrow of the Bombay Congress has touched off sharp reactions not only in the accredited parties of the Left but among her own supporters as well as the Syndicate. In fact, on an issue like this, there is every likelihood of the Syndicate taking the initiative in forcing a major crisis for the Government in the Lok Sabha, knowing fully well that Smt Gandhi cannot count upon the support of the Communists when it is a question of giving concessions to the vested interests.

This particular episode has proved to be particularly embarrassing for the radical Congressmen supporting Smt Gandhi. They are aware of the difficulty in explaining away the deal on the ground that it had been hanging fire far too long. At a time when one of the major assets of the

Young Turks is their campaign for probe into the Birla irregularities, any such important concession to the same Birlas puts them in a false position. The situation is made worse because of the inner tensions inside Smt Gandhi's camp: it is no secret in New Delhi that some of the Young Turks have emerged almost as a watchdog opposition within the Indira Congress.

The dilemma that faces Smt Gandhi is thus not easy to solve. On the one hand, the Syndicate pressure is likely to provoke her own supporters to call for more and more doses of radicalism, while on the other, she may be left with no means to undertake such measures, nor the political party which can generate the mass sanction for a radical programme. Most of the time of the new Congress leadership has so far been spent on manoeuvrings or manipulations in Bihar and UP while Smt Gandhi has kept the country guessing about her next major move. No serious rapport with friends and allies on the basis of a feasible programme is yet being worked out.

It is in this background that the guessing game in New Delhi is now concentrated almost exclusively on whether Smt Gandhi is going to call for a mid-term parliamentary poll; and if so, when. The last one month has seen many time-tables being sold for such a poll early this year, but there is an unusual lull in its being talked about in the Capital since the Bombay session. The latest theory is that she may present a vote-catching Budget and then go in for the dissolution of the Lok Sabha. The flaw in such a theory is that any Budget entailing large outlays on social service can hardly be popular as it has to provide for resources to meet the new charges. On the other hand, if she is reconciled to the prospect of carrying on with the existing support in the Lok Sabha, there is a very good case for going in for strengthening her Cabinet, a job long overdue.

The next few days will show what Smt Gandhi is going to choose—the strenuous challenge of a fresh poll, or the careful

picking of Ministers, out of a whole host of impatient aspirants.

Meanwhile, Smt Gandhi's Government has to work out the details of the measures for the implementation of the Bombay decisions. The work has already reached an advanced stage, the advantage for those responsible for formulating the measures has been that before presenting them before the Bombay Congress, the Prime Minister had before her a clear picture of what the financial and administrative implications of each proposal would be.

As such, it has become all the more imperative that there should be immediate implementation of at least some of the major proposals. Reports are current in the Capital that some of the measures would be announced very shortly, may be through ordinances, while the Budget in February will reflect the spirit of the Bombay resolution on economic policy.

Sri Chavan, in the meantime, will spell out to the former Princes this week how the Bombay decision to abolish the Privy Purses and the princely privileges, is going to be put into effect.

Whatever is implemented here and now will no doubt help to some measure to dispel the prevailing cynicism about the Government's earnestness to honour the Bombay commitments. But the real test will come over the promised measures of agrarian reform in this sphere, not only the Congress Ministries loyal to Smt Gandhi will have to announce their policy decisions as follow-up measures from Bombay but even where the Indira Congress is in Opposition, it will have to campaign for such measures. There is no short cut for the Indira Congress in the struggle to demarcate itself from the Syndicate. Only its readiness to enforce radical policies can ensure for it the right to demarcate itself in the eyes of the masses from the Syndicate.

The crown of glory is indeed studded with thorns for Indira Gandhi today

N C

January 6

MAINSTREAM

Posture and Perspective

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE three-day Bharatiya Jana Sangh session, which took place in Patna in the last week of December, marked the end of a period of frustration in the party's life visible since the mid-term poll. The party entered the New Year, confident claim of being the only party capable of acting as the spearhead of what was described as "nationalist and democratic forces".

The All-India session was preceded by a three-day Working Committee meeting. On the first day, the meeting was attended by 24 out of the total 31 members of the Working Committee. Important among the absentees were Sri Balraj Madhok and Sri Prem Nath Dogra. Sri Madhok was said to have been away to Bombay for a Parliament Committee meeting. None of the correspondents therefore took his absence seriously.

One of the all-India Secretaries, Sri P. Parmeswaran from Kerala, briefed the press on the trends of discussion on the political situation, which was still to be concluded. He said that firstly, a section of the Working Committee thought that the Jana Sangh was nearer to the Syndicate. However the "general feeling" was against such an understanding, for the split in the Congress was not based on ideology. Secondly, the over-all policy of the Jana Sangh would be guided by the fact that the Prime Minister had joined hands with the Communists and therefore she had to be dislodged from power wherever she and her group were in power. Elsewhere, her efforts to gain power have to be blocked.

He was asked by pressmen to explain the Jana Sangh charge

against the Prime Minister that she was sustaining herself with the help of the Communists, particularly in the background of the gap between the votes in Opposition to and in support of the Adjournment motion in Parliament. Sri Parmeswaran avoided the question and said he was not referring to "merely the numerical" strength of the Communists. One of the leaders said informally that the "danger" regarding the Syndicate was that they were concentrating all their fire on Indira alone, and therefore giving it the touch of a personal feud rather than a fight on ideological grounds.

At the next morning's briefing, the reporters were told that the decision had been taken by the Working Committee to finalise the Economic Policy statement, the main discussion revolved around "urban property" and it was agreed that "concentration of wealth in few hands should be checked". One view was that the prevailing income gap could be 1:20, another view was presented by Maharashtra asking for ceiling on urban property. At the evening briefing, Sri Vajpayee dealt with the political situation.

Why is mid-term poll inherent in the present situation? Sri Vajpayee gave the following reasons:

1. Support to Indira by other parties is not granted on all issues and for all times. Therefore, she can not continue except on an *ad hoc* basis.

2. The wave of the Prime Minister's popularity is diminishing everyday, although her faction continues to harbour illusion of still riding on waves. For example, Gaekwad came and went away. Besides, the Opposition

parties supporting her have started asking for price, leading to further division in the Indira Congress, for instance, on Chandigarh, the Haryana and Punjab Congress are fighting each other. Similarly, there is the fight between her two leading supporters in Kashmir. He said he was therefore certain about the mid-term poll coming. He added "I have suggested that the President should not accept the Prime Minister's advice in this regard, but it is not necessary for the President to accept our advice".

Can the Jana Sangh provide an alternative Government? Sri Vajpayee said the Jana Sangh alone can not, but democratic, nationalist parties can, on the basis of a minimum common programme. The other possibility is that she may herself go in for a coalition.

Therefore, he said, alternatives are Mid-term poll or coalition. He said, a mid-term poll would be more costly for her. She would not get more than 120 seats.

He said, no decision had been taken by the Jana Sangh whether to fight independently or on the basis of adjustment or alliance, it could be adjustment based on a minimum programme but campaigning separately.

He emphasised that the Congress split had led to fragmentation rather than polarisation based on ideology. However, in the light of the increased Communist threat, he said, "polarisation in thinking" has begun and opened the possibility of all others getting together.

In reply to questions he said, if all could cooperate on specific issues, as in the case of All-India Radio, it may slowly lead to alliances. The Syndicate being in Opposition, such cooperation could be possible with it. In States where the Syndicate is in power, Jana Sangh will offer cooperation to it only on the basis of specific programme.

Next day, briefing on the Economic Policy, Dr Mahavir said, in the field of Agriculture the Jana Sangh favours uniform ceiling law in terms of standard acres, about 30 such acres for one family unit of five. Asked whether

the Party would give direction to its Punjab State unit to demand implementation of the same, Dr Mahavir said that such direction might not be possible since "others are there in the Ministry." Answering the question, how the Jana Sangh hoped to see the Land Reform Laws implemented, Dr Mahavir said "By educating the people." He thought that getting them implemented with the help of organised landless labour was against the party policy "That is a class-war approach", and the Jana Sangh thinks that to be an incorrect approach. Legal and constitutional help should be sought to get the laws implemented.

Regarding urban property, he said, the party is in favour of distribution of property on a "diffused basis". He said, the Party had adopted this principle about 10-15 years ago, it is therefore nothing new for it. Since the issue has been raised anew, "we will spell out our policy in its concrete form."

Answering questions, Dr Mahavir had no objection on imposing income-tax on prosperous agriculturists. The only point that need to be kept in view was that the agriculturist should be given some breathing space before higher taxes were imposed. As regards exemption to uneconomic holdings, "our view is that the revenue is very small, mere abolition will not be a gain, it may ultimately be a loss to peasants in terms of land records."

On December 27, Sri Sunder Singh Bhandari briefed on his Report as General Secretary. He made following points.

(a) Membership came down by about two lakhs from 11.20 lakhs last year (b) UP membership came down by 50,000, Bihar by 25-30 thousand, Rajasthan by 20 thousand, Andhra by 10 thousand, Maharashtra by five thousand and so on. Delhi was static at 50 thousand, Punjab increased about 10 thousand mainly in tribal areas, West Bengal, has made very little headway, about 20 thousand, in Kerala although membership is increasing, results are not easy due to sharp classwise division. No political reasons could be given for this fall. The Party organi-

sation was engaged in flood relief in Bihar, while UP and Rajasthan where draught affected.

There was no complaint about bogus membership, "for representatives are not elected in proportion to membership—(the delegates to the Patna conference were over 20,700, compared to 11,000 at Bombay early last year.)"

Regarding the Muslim members, Sri Bhandari said: We make no distinction between majority and minority community. Their response is better in rural areas. The Muslim's favourable response to the Jana Sangh was based on local considerations. Their overall bias against the Party still continues. We try to take them along on local socio-economic issues in order to overcome this bias. However, we have not been able to clarify that our attitude towards Pakistan has no bearing on our attitude towards Indian Muslims. There are Pak-nationals spread over the length and breadth of India, who indulge in all sorts of espionage activities and remain active to take advantage of any situation to foment riots. Unfortunately, the Indian Muslims too, give them shelter—that creates a sense of their doubtful loyalty.

He did not rule out individual Hindus working as Pak-agents. But it is difficult to call a Hindu participant in riots as Pak-agent—that would require proper investigations. The Indian Muslims giving shelter to Pak-agents out of ignorance have to be educated.

What are the shortcomings of the session? Sri Bhandari gave his old theses that the Party was suddenly called upon to shoulder work on three fronts—Governmental, public relations and organisational—for which it took time to prepare itself.

Regarding Vajpayee-Madhok controversy it has been noted by party workers more than by the public. Sri Bhandari said Sri Madhok's views and suggestion are always discussed in the Working Committee. Sometime some of them are accepted and adopted, while others, not acceptable to the majority, are rejected.

The party carried out campaigns regarding immediate relief to people. Sri Bhandari said, they

faced hostile audience in the beginning due to the Party stand on bank nationalisation. Now we are heard. Meanwhile, Sri Subramaniam Swamy, the author of "Swadeshi Framework of Fourth Plan", said the Plan assumed that a JS-led Government would be running the country.

The same evening, Madhok talked to the press on the internal situation. He was asked that after having joined Governments with CPI only in the recent past, what made the Jana Sangh so bitterly anti-Communist now? Sri Madhok said. "We were clear even then. Then, it became imperative to oust the Congress. So a bitter pill had to be swallowed. As you all know, I was the one opposed to such a course even then."

Does not this smack of opportunism? "No. It smacks more of lack of comprehension of Communist ideology and methodology. We too learn by experience. There is no possibility of such an optimism any more. Also, we thought that we could curb the Communists. However, the experiment failed miserably for many reasons. There is no chance of repeating of similar experiment any more."

Why can not then Smt Indira Gandhi try and have experience? "If I have learnt a bitter lesson through experience, I believe that others should not follow the same course. Moreover the implications of such an experience by her will not be detrimental for her alone but for the whole country."

Why a Treason Law to combat CPM, why not PD Act?

"Unlike PD Act, under the Treason Law the accused will have the right to go to a court of law. For curbing communal activities there are so many Acts. If the Government brings such a law against CP(M) and others, it will have widest support."

What is the solution of the Muslim problem?

"First was the transfer of population. It was not accepted. The second was to educate them, Indianise them. That too was not done, and therefore the problem continues. And now it has manifested itself with a vengeance."

"If proof of our (Hindus) good behaviour towards Muslims is needed, the figures of population growth is enough proof. Population of Indian Muslims has grown from three crores to five or six crores in the two decades while in this very period the Hindu population in Pakistan came down from one and a half crores to 93 lakhs."

"Now, of course, the only way out is Indianisation and unification of India and not the transfer of population."

"The worst communalist in India is Indira Gandhi followed by Chavan, who have vested interest in Muslim communalism. She has done more than anybody else to create communalism and strengthen the disruptive forces."

Some say you are more anti-Muslim than others in the Jana Sangh

"I am a true friend of the Muslims. I have more Muslim friends than all the members of the Jana Sangh Working Committee put together have. The Jana Sangh is a good friend of Muslims, I specially. The Indianisation of Muslims also means modernisation of Islam. Indian Islam has not modernised itself, while in many other Islamic states it has been done."

What prevents it?

"First, the vested interests of power who strengthen communalism. Secondly, the Existence of the Aligarh University. The British planted this seed of disruption. Today, it is the intellectual centre of Communist-Muslim League alliance. The Indianisation of Aligarh University is therefore of utmost importance. Thirdly, lack of modernisation of Islam."

The three-day open session held in five-sessions, devoted about 12 hours in all and passed the three main resolutions on Political Situation, Internal Situation and Economic Policy.

The Patna session marked the virtual end of one era of inner party tussle between Jana Sangh President Sri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and the former party President Sri Balraj Madhok, resolving it in favour of the former and entirely to the detriment of the latter. Without naming Sri Madhok,

Sri Vajpayee answered his points of criticism circulated among delegates in the form of Sri Madhok's article with an appeal for delegate's intervention to stop "character assassination" by a section in the party. Sri Vajpayee described the differences as purely on strategy and not on ideology. He justified the Jana Sangh's joining coalitions with the Communists after the 1967 General Election as correct tactical move in the then prevailing political situation. The present decision to spearhead an all-out crusade against the Communists was valid in the situation created after the Congress split, he held. In his characteristic style Sri Vajpayee refused to accept the allegation that the Jana Sangh's hesitations were responsible for Sri Sanjiva Reddy's defeat in the Presidential contest.

An interesting aspect of this controversy noted by the observers was the complete isolation of Sri Madhok in the party, with Sri Vajpayee remaining firmly in saddle, although the party leadership adopted the controversial policy plank of Sri Madhok regarding Indianisation of Muslims.

The extension of the approach of "Indianisation" to the economic field was a marked feature of the economic resolution which called for indianisation of foreign-owned tea, drugs, soap, matches, vegetable products and cigarette industries, and was further amended to include also jute in this list. According to the mover of the resolution, Dr Bhai Mahavir, it would mean the Government taking over these companies and auctioning them "to those who can competently run" them.

This and a few other features of the economic resolution showed a new bid on the Jana Sangh's part to evolve an economic programme with a broad appeal and an all-India character. The party favoured nationalisation of foreign banks as a corollary to the nationalisation of fourteen Indian banks, and at the same time debunked the bank nationalisation by Smt Gandhi's Government as a retrograde step—a remarkable trick of middle-of-the-road posture.

The implication of the much advertised middle-of-the-road policy of the Jana Sangh leaders appears to be that the main effort is to be directed to sponsor causes of medium and large Indian industries and their expansion on a nation-wide scale. Taking its cue from Japan, the party wants to place a heavy demand on the public sector, while seeking to contain its scope to only the essential fields. For instance this sector should manufacture implements which feed small industries all over, while in turn involving the latter in producing what the former might require. This pattern of economic development, according to the Jana Sangh conception, is useful not only because it will help build the economy but remove unemployment to some extent, as well.

The Patna session will be marked for initiating another era in the Jana Sangh's life. According to observers, this session for the first time in the history of Jana Sangh gatherings heard delegates asking the leadership to amend its resolutions to include demands raised by the masses outside the party fold. For instance, the Uttar Pradesh leader Sri Pratap Narain Tiwari frankly told the leadership that mere resolutions on 'land to tiller' would fetch not an inch to them as had been the case hitherto of similar resolutions by other parties. He wanted the party to organise the landless and unleash their struggle for land "peacefully" to counter the effect of methods being used by the Communists in West Bengal and Kerala. Dr Mahavir, rejected the amendment and proposed that education of the masses as the Jana Sangh's way for getting land reform laws implemented. Similarly inclusion of demands for ending of privy purses and ceiling on urban property were either ignored as being out of the scope of the resolution or as subject for separate resolution.

Not that the movers of amendments were very clear about their objectives. They however reflected the impact of mass unrest and consciousness. Andhra's Sri Satyanarayan Reddy

pointed out that the landlords go to cities and buy hotels and buildings and therefore there should be ceiling on urban property. He wanted that the peasant should be given credit for his daughter's marriage. He was the only delegate who through an amendment wanted the end of the Privy Purse.

Dr Mahavir's remarks on the demand for ceiling on urban property were interesting. He said this would require careful thought on details. "Those who have raised the slogan have themselves not been able to make any headway." Let us not be led away by slogans, he said.

The bifurcation of the Political Resolution into two separate resolutions—one on political situation and the other on internal situation—was rather unusual. One possible explanation was that it was meant to give a chance to Sri Madhok to take up the political situation without allowing him to air his well-known view on the Congress split, demanding immediate alliance with the Syndicate and the Swatantra.

However, the explanation given by the leadership was that they wanted to deal separately with two aspects of the present political situation, namely, (i) the danger of the Indira-Communist alliance at Central level, and (ii) the Communist-Muslim alliance which the Jana Sangh leadership had always been warning against. While the first is intended for all non-Communist political parties, the second primarily is to gear up the indoctrinated party ranks and rouse them to the tasks laid down in the first one.

The main points of the Resolution on Political Situation can be summed up as follows. As a result of the Congress split, Smt Gandhi is ruling with minority support at the Centre as well as in some of the States. The split has led to further fragmentation of political forces rather than polarisation on ideology. Personalities, ambitions are the root causes of split. This has led to further confusion on economic issues, for, both factions are "prisoners of socialist slogans." Politically, the split is significant, it reveals

Smt Gandhi's dependence on Communists for maintaining her minority rule. This will compel all parties to define their attitude regarding this development. This factor has at least touched off "polarisation in political thinking." The Prime Minister's denial of this alliance relates only to their "methods" and not programme. Communism is a "pernicious doctrine" both regarding means and ends. The split has affected all parties, except the Jana Sangh and therefore heavy responsibility rests on it. It decides to spearhead the fight for the consolidation of patriotic forces. The Communists by themselves are discredited. Their alignment with the party in power creates the real danger. The Party appeals all parties to appreciate the danger and "supplement their politics of competition with politics of cooperation." The strategy is (1) "Due to Smt Gandhi's alliance with Communist", the major objective is to dislodge her group from power and prevent formation of any new Governments by her. (2) Prepare for the mid-term poll.

The draft resolution was amended to add a third point in the strategy. The Jana Sangh will strive to form Governments on the basis of a minimum common programme, with the cooperation of nationalist and democratic elements in the States and at the Centre. While moving the resolution, Sri Sunder Singh Bhandari elaborating the reasons for the new strategy said: First, neither of the Congress factions is in a majority. The Jana Sangh will not allow Smt Gandhi to overthrow the syndicate in States. Secondly, it is necessary to prepare people for mid-term poll, because the Prime Minister is keeping people with her under the threat of a poll. She is pursuing the policy of postponement. Confrontation is bound to come and therefore the mid-term poll, too.

In the debate that followed, many interesting points come up. Many of the amendments wanted clear commitment that the Jana Sangh would form Government with the like-minded parties after Smt Gandhi's Government was thrown out.

Sri Durga Prasad Nathani

from Calcutta, moved that the resolution should specifically mention that the Jana Sangh would strive to "isolate" not only Communists but "capitalist elements" also. He said that Smt Gandhi was proclaiming herself to be a Leftist and dubbed the Jana Sangh as pro-capitalist; this impression got strengthened when the Jana Sangh leaders talked about working jointly with the pro-capitalist Swatantra party. He suggested that the Jana Sangh should declare that it would remain alert against capitalist and pro-American elements. "Only then we can save ourselves from criticism."

Punjab's Sri Vishwanathan wanted specific mention of the fact that foreign powers were intervening in Indian politics through foreign aid, cheap literature, money etc., and that the Jana Sangh would mobilise people against this. He said Smt Gandhi was a victim of such foreign intervention.

Sri Shrichand Goel MP wanted it laid down that the Prime Minister could not dissolve Parliament. She should resign in such an eventuality and the President invite other Opposition parties.

One delegate wanted the Party to mobilise 10 thousand volunteers for marching into West Bengal and facing Naxalite danger. Sri Vajpayee however ridiculed this suggestion.

Sri Vishwambhar Datt Sharma of Delhi asked the word "Leftist" to be replaced by "anti-nationalist." Sri Vajpayee immediately said no to this. "all Leftist parties are not anti-national. There are nationalists among them."

In his reply to the debate Smt Sunder Singh Bhandari made some significant remarks. (1) Congress-Communist alliance is the most significant of the recent political developments. Communists infiltration into the Centre can open ways to all type of mischief. This has to be realised. (2) If the communists succeed in getting support of regional and other parties, the gravity of the situation will increase. There will be mushroom

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Changing Face of Non-Congressism

NAREN DAS

NON-Congressism is a new slogan. It has grown out of the pressing urge of the people to remove the Congress from power. Dr Rammanohar Lohia was the propounder of this slogan.

Twenty years of Congress misrule, created an intolerable situation in the country, with widespread poverty, unemployment and national humiliation before foreign aggressor. The only solution lay in removing the focus of the canker—the Congress. There was no scope for any palliative. The need of the hour was the overthrow of the Congress Governments both at the Centre and in the States.

Ideal Leader

Dr Lohia was a product of the Congress. To him Gandhi was the ideal leader. He had intense faith in non-violence. He did not believe in the policy of insurrection subscribed to by the CSP of the thirties. His conception of socialism was drawn mainly from Gandhi. He was a habitual wearer of Khadi and lived an extremely simple life.

However, in spite of his affection for Gandhian values he turned a rebel against the Congress. His admiration for Nehru in his early political life is well known as is his opposition to Nehru after Independence.

By the time of the formation of the SSP in mid-sixties, he secured a wide platform for transforming his rapidly changing ideas into reality. He carried on energetically the campaign to

“remove the Congress and save the country”. The country was deeply riven with discontent. Dr Lohia gave shape to this universal urge that the Congress must be removed by all possible means, come what may. If it was a deluge after the Congress, even that should be acceptable since ultimately some good might come from it.

With a single track mind, he appealed to all the Opposition parties to enter into electoral pacts, instead of fighting the Congress individually. He was fully conscious of the heterogeneous character of the Opposition. The Opposition parties that existed were ideologically both to the left and the right of the Congress.

Most of these parties confronted each other in the race for power. The Congress could not be defeated at the polls while these parties indulged in mutual antagonism. Any programmatic unity among these parties was impossible.

Congress Defeat

The question widely asked was, what next after the Congress defeat? Dr Lohia believed that defeat of the Congress at the polls would unleash latent forces that would compel the relevant parties to unite. It would be extremely difficult for any mass party to go against the mandate of the people given at the polls.

As a matter of fact, the Congress was defeated in 1967 General Elections in as many as eight States where non-Congress Governments were formed. The ministries were formed by victorious parties having serious diffe-

rences among them on basic political and economic issues. The Swatantra and the Jana Sangh, on one side, and the Socialists and the Communists, on the other, all agreed to run non-Congress Governments in different States in obedience to the peoples' mandate. The impossible became possible.

But some of these ministries did not last long. In five States, the majority of the united parties was fragile. It melted before the onslaughts of organised capitalism and the Congress party. The Congress could not accept the defeat at the polls and refused to go out of the administration. Though rejected by the electorate, it managed to re-enter the Government in different States through manipulation and bribery.

But no less responsible for the breaking of united fronts was weakness of the non-Congress Governments. Present in them were great differences in outlook, approach and programme. So, the temporary unity forged, collapsed within a span of twelve months.

In five States, mid-term elections had to be held. In majority of the States, the semblance of unity attained in 1967 could not be forged again during 1969. In two States, the non-Congress parties won. In Bihar they failed, but the Congress could not emerge as a determining force as in UP and Haryana.

This was an indication of the receding tide in the movement for the removal of the Congress from power. This set back is significant. Non-Congress leadership can ignore this hard lesson at their peril.

The failure of the Samyukta Vidhayak Dal to emerge as a majority force in some States and the massive success of the UF in West Bengal warrant careful comparative scrutiny. So also it is necessary to study the pattern of united front functioning as a government in 1967. Whether the gaps in UF movement were rectified and thus led to their massive victory in West Bengal, needs deep study for coming to positive conclusions for future reference.

During the mid-term elections,

The author is a well-known leader of the SSP in West Bengal.

the problem of instability loomed large in public mind. People do not generally want an unstable government. This is a big factor to be considered. West Bengal electorate was fully conscious of the danger of instability. That is why they voted UF to power with a huge majority.

People in general do not like the Congress. But they do not find an alternative. In UP people voted Congress in larger number probably with an eye to stability. Naturally, the question of poverty and inequality should be combined with the promise of a stable government to replace the Congress.

In West Bengal, people were divided into two camps, the rich and the poor. They realised that Congress stood for the rich and the UF for the poor. This was the biggest factor contributing to their victory. Casteism, communalism or any other parochial outlook did not cloud the public mind. Even Harijans and other backward classes voted UF for economic and class interests.

Non-Congressism must stand for the poor and underdogs as opposed to the vested interests. This means that the programme matters most, parochialism has to be combatted not by pampering parochialism, but by opposing it with basic economic issues. In this respect, non-Congressism will need necessary amendment. Parties with Rightist leanings like the Swatantra, eliminate themselves on this score.

Dynamic Instrument

In the present altered situation non-congressism warrants a radical quasi-socialist programme. Without this bold appeal to the people on basic economic issues, direct approach to the masses is not possible. Any tempering of the basic economic issues will eventually lead to the defeat of non-Congressism.

Evidently non-Congressism must demand the emergence of a Left or quasi-left-oriented programme for galvanising the masses. In a general way, non-Congressism must reflect the urge of the oppressed people of the country. It should show that casteism

and communalism have their roots fundamentally in economic issues but religion is used as a facade. Moreover, non-Congressism should not be merely a static and mechanical understanding among different parties but a dynamic instrument for bringing about a change in the present order of things.

This trend in the political current has been accelerated by the split in the Congress. Both the wings of the Congress are vying with each other for a radicalisation of their immediate programmes. Radical social reforms so long kept in cold storage have been resurrected.

Whether the Congress groups implement them or not is not the problem. Their acceptance of certain programme and approach have put the Congress rank and file another supporting base in their movement in a radical direction. Either they implement the announced programme or the supporting base would cut adrift from the apex.

Qualitative Change

The split in the Congress has brought into bold relief a very important factor, namely, the possibility of new governments, more radical and progressive, not only in the States but at the Centre also.

In 1967, 64 per cent of the electorate had voted against the Congress, but it retained power at the Centre by the skin of its teeth. The success of the Congress was mainly due to the miserable failure of the non-Congress parties to come to any understanding in the distribution of seats for Parliament.

The non-Congress parties were somehow able to sort out their differences at the state level to their utter neglect at the national level. This is the main reason which enabled the Congress to obtain a majority in Parliament with only 36 per cent of the votes polled in their favour. The success achieved at the State level could not be repeated at the national level.

However, 1970 is not 1967. A sort of qualitative change has taken place in the political chess-

board after the split in the Congress. No single party, including the Congress, will possibly obtain a majority in the next parliamentary election, now or later. Coalition is bound to be the pattern of governments for a long time to come.

If coalition government is the order of the day, the problem before us is to strike a creative tune in the new phase. In this respect non-Congressism that allowed electoral pacts among all non-Congress parties irrespective of ideological bias, has of necessity to be rejected.

Compelling Influence

In 1967, it included Socialists, Communists, Jana Sangh and Swatantra parties. This ideological medley was one of the main causes of the failure of SVD in many states. It is one thing to make adjustments in the distribution of seats, and quite a different one in agreeing to a common minimum programme and joint functioning in a government. The difficulty mounts when an agreement at the Central level is to be arrived at. It is a Herculean task.

But one cannot run away from the responsibility, however difficult that may be. Even adjustment of seats among different parties at this stage is not at all possible. Like King Charles' head, it will continue to crop up among the negotiating forces. A party of haves nots, cannot have any truck with a party of haves.

In this sphere non-Congressism has to make a choice, whether it is to be an ideology of the oppressed and exploited or that of the vested interests. No Socialist or radical party can have unity with conservative or reactionary forces. The choice is very clear. The Socialists cannot have any truck with the Swatantra and the Jana Sangh which move to the right of the Right-wing Congress. The difficulty faced by the Socialist parties is that they do not see eye to eye with the Communists on foreign policy. This will be a big determining factor in the

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Jawan's Judiciary

J. KUMAR

RECENT events in the country have unleashed a process of re-thinking on what was once considered fundamental, and it is being increasingly conceded that the laws and legal processes should move with the times.

The discussion whether the fundamental right to property is so sacrosanct that even its anti-social aspect should necessarily be tolerated, has upset both radicals and conservatives.

Archaic Outlook

However, there are areas in our national life where archaic outlook and worse norms imposed since the British days continue in all glory. This is true, most of all, in relation to what is considered democratic norms in respect of the public services and men in the armed forces.

The "Conduct Rules" framed by the British still hold sway with much the same colonial norms as far as the Central and State Government employees are concerned, but a redeeming feature is the protection enjoyed by this section of our citizens under Article 311 of the Constitution. It is still considered unsafe and, perhaps, altogether subversive, to extend the right to organise and collective bargaining by ratifying ILO Conventions 87 and 98 in respect of public services in India. And the thinking remains, it appears, much the same, even after the rickshaw-walla is considered creditworthy by the nationalised banks.

But far worse in this respect is the absence of any forward thinking in regard to the special judicial machinery created for the armed forces personnel. It will

be recalled that under Article 33 of the Constitution, the right to constitutional remedies envisaged in Part III stands abrogated to the extent determined by Parliament.

The forward thinking which was noticed in some respects when Parliament debated the Navy Bill in 1957, abruptly stopped thereafter, and the earlier enactments—the Army Act, 1950, and the Air Force Act, 1950, have remained where they stood, that is, exactly twenty years ago.

In the scheme of judicial processes available to the armed forces as per the special laws enacted by Parliament, an important provision relates to the creation of an independent appellate machinery, guaranteeing an independent review at a high judicial level.

Important Provision

The significance of creating such a machinery was highlighted when the then Defence Minister, Sri V K. Krishna Memon, spoke on the Navy Bill in the Lok Sabha on July 22, 1957.

He said: "Since the Joint Committee will be going into the provisions in detail, I need only refer to the broad principles that govern them."

"First of all, for the first time the court-martial proceedings will be governed by the Indian Evidence Act, that is, there will be a more legal way of dealing with the accused before a court-martial. In the matter of prosecution and also of reaching a finding from the evidence before them, the provisions of the Indian Evidence Act would apply."

"Questions of law will be decided before the Judge Advo-

cate—not the Judge Advocate General, but the Judge Advocate. He is very much in the position of a High Court Judge in criminal cases. Questions of law will be before him, while questions of fact will be before the members of the court-martial. It will function, if one might use rather imprecise language, in the same manner as while the jury decides on questions of fact, the judge decides on questions of law."

"It is very much in line with modern thinking and calculated to safeguard the rights of the individuals, especially having regard to the very strenuous conditions under which members of the Armed Forces accept service."

"Thirdly, there is no appeal from the decision of the court-martial. That sounds rather drastic, but this Bill provides for a judicial review by the Judge Advocate General, who is not a member of the court-martial and who is the highest judicial officer of the Indian Navy, and who under no circumstances is likely to be influenced by any other consideration than that of the exercise of judicial discretion." (*Lok Sabha Debates*, pp. 4580-81)

The original Bill stipulated that "a person shall not be qualified for appointment as Judge Advocate General of the Navy unless he is a citizen of India and (a) has for at least ten years held a judicial office in the territory of India, or (b) has for at least ten years been an advocate of a High Court or two or more such courts in succession." As the then Defence Minister stated, "these are more or less the same qualifications for a High Court Judge."

Specific Qualifications

The Select Committee which reported on the Bill, further improved upon this provision and laid down specific qualifications for the deputies and assistants to the Judge Advocate General.

Some of the members on the Select Committee, however, thought that the provisions did not go far enough. Sri W S Barlingay stated in his note. "The

Lewis Committee report in UK and the Oliver Committee which preceded it, both recommended that the Judge Advocate General should be responsible to some Minister other than the Secretary of State for War or Air. This suggestion was accepted by the Government of the UK and the Judge Advocate General in the UK is no longer responsible to the Minister for War or Air or the Navy but to the Lord Chancellor.

"My proposal was a more modest one—it was that the Judge Advocate General should be responsible directly to the Defence Minister. This position indeed obtains in Canada."

Although he did not press his point in the note, Sri W. S. Barlingay hoped that "Government should as a matter of administrative arrangement ensure complete independence of the Judge Advocate General."

Judicial Remedies

In the final discussion on the Bill, the point was raised that the Army Act as well as the Air Force Act should be amended to incorporate the progressive provisions in the Navy Bill in respect of the judicial review and qualifications of the judicial officers. No such amending legislation has, however, been brought all these years although considerable modernisation was brought about in other respects.

Moreover, several important suggestions made by members of the Select Committee (though not accepted by the majority) to further improve the provisions relating to judicial remedies. For instance, - Sri T C N Menon, Sri K.K. Warrior, Sri V.K. Dhage and Sri V Prasad Rao stated: "We also find that there are certain provisions in the Bill which invest naval authorities with powers to punish summarily even without giving adequate opportunity to the alleged delinquents. We consider these as arbitrary violations of natural justice. The fundamental principle of jurisdiction, that is, the principle of *Ardie Alterum Partem*, should be applicable in all cases of trial and punishment, however insignificant the offence or misconduct might be.

nificant the offence or misconduct might be.

"We recommend to both Houses of Parliament that necessary provisions should be incorporated in the Bill so that there shall neither be a trial nor a punishment under this Bill unless a charge clearly laying down the manner, the place, and the time at which the offence is committed written in a language understandable to the accused is served on him, and ample opportunity given to the accused to answer and refute those charges

"The trial, in any case, shall be public and the liberty and life of any member of the armed forces shall not be deprived of except according to due process of law, the law being the ordinary criminal law of the land

"It is to be pointed out in this connection that in the United States, all trials by court martial are subject to the well-known 'due process clause' of the 14th Amendment of the USA Constitution" (Lok Sabha, The Navy Bill, 1957; *Report of the Joint Committee*, pp xxi-xxx)

Also, Sri Mool Chand Jain, in his dissenting note, observed that "no judicial appeal against

court martial decisions is provided in the Bill. It was argued that similar is the position in the Air Force Act and the Army Act. Considerations of delay and discipline were also pointed out. However, these are not reasons weighty enough to override the necessity of a judicial appeal. A judicial appeal always gives a sense of security and will thus increase a sense of real discipline in our Armed Force."

Sri Jain further suggested that if an independent judicial appeal could not be provided in the Bill, a separate Act on the lines of Court Martial (Appeals) Act, 1951, in the UK and a similar Act of 1955 in Australia should be passed in our country. In USA and Canada also, judicial appeals are allowed against court martial decisions" (Report, pp xxxi)

Apparently, the law in these respects was very much short of the norms prevailing in the advanced countries, thirteen years ago. Indeed, the gap is far bigger now. The winds of change can scarcely afford to miss the jawan's judiciary and his legal rights, and these are as important as any other aspect of our democratic advance

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THE ECONOMIC SCENE:

An Economic Analysis of the (Ruling) AICC's Economic Policy Report

M.D. NALAPAT

IT was rather unfair on the part of the Congress President to give a scant fortnight to the Economic Panel of the (ruling) AICC to make a report on the entire economy, and to man this panel very largely with politicians unfamiliar with economic realities

The result is an eleven page document which is first-class as a political document, but which exhibits several weaknesses as an economic one. Having said this, I may add that several of its recommendations are worthy of immediate execution, and most of its aims are genuinely socialist, although some are very difficult to achieve

In what follows I shall judge the Report on the basis of two criteria, (i) maximisation of popular welfare, and (ii) practicability. Both are necessary conditions for the usefulness of the Panel's recommendations, and it is by paying insufficient attention to either or both of them that the Report has laid itself open to gleeful attacks from unsympathetic quarters

Necessary Conditions

The Report's first blunder occurs early (*vide* Section I, para 4). This is that in India "redistribution of income and wealth is necessary for acceleration of economic growth. This is also necessary to give the State the capacity to invite from the people willing cooperation in accepting heavier burdens"

It is not *redistribution* of income that is needed for development so much as *reduction* of income into productive channels. The sight of our *geunesse doree*

of the cities, rocking away in their pop parlours and discotheques, and of the ostentatious spending on feasts and entertainment expenses is proof that in India there is ample scope for income redirection

As for redistribution, a certain amount of this is essential to recover for labour its lost percentage of the national product since 1947. But if the objective is merely to hand over more income to the poor and then immediately take it away in the name of "willing cooperation in accepting heavier burdens for development", the whole exercise is a waste of time

Deplorable Condition

The condition of labour in some sectors is deplorable, but an attack on this evil should involve (a) promotion of better housing and environmental facilities, and (b) lowering through fiscal means the cost of commodities (such as clothing) consumed by labour. It is no use increasing the wages of labour, for experience shows that prices rise in proportion to an increase in wages for the economy as a whole, thus leaving the relative position of labour virtually unchanged

The position of labour's (real) wage relative to prices should rise (and not merely for ideological reasons as Sri JRD Tata recently pointed out, such a rise would stimulate demand and enterprise generally), but this should be of a long-term rather than of a transitory nature

Great inequality of incomes does have one thing going in favour of it, with only a few people rich, the state will find it

easier to divert the major part of this income to productive channels. That the state does not seem to have much interest in doing this is evident from the fact that the Princes are to get Rs 25 crores as compensation (for living off the Exchequer all this while) without any stipulation as to how this income should be spent

The next few sections contain truisms that may be found in any basic economic textbook. These include the fact that (monopolies are undesirable Section I, para 7), and that democracy, employment and manpower utilisation are desirable, that savings are necessary to economic growth (thus involving slight theoretical tangle, for in some cases more savings may be the resultant and not the cause of development. This is chiefly so when the initial level of savings is low), and that consumption of inessential articles ought to be curbed.

The sections calling for the abolition of privy purses and curbs on unnecessary expenditure are timely and deserve prompt action (Section II, paras 11-12)

However, while it is possible that the increased use of low petrol-using Indian cars instead of foreign models would improve slightly our foreign exchange position by making us import less petroleum, I do not see how any substantial dent on poverty will be made by forcing our leaders out into less comfortable apartments. Of course, if poorer quarters teach these gentleman the value of money, it will be worthwhile

Wasteful Expenditure

I have in mind three New Socialist Ministers who are known for their lavish expenditure on house and office furnishings. If these gentlemen were made to realize that a new sofa set every month, or a new mural for the bedroom wall is not essential for socialism, it would be well

The Report's recommendation regarding expenditure in government offices is excellent, but one wishes that some concrete steps had been suggested showing how

this could be effected. As many in the Panel have had administrative experience, this should not have been difficult.

Section II, para 14, is good when it says that lavish expenditure on residential houses be curbed. This point has been made by several economists, including myself (*Eastern Economist*, July 19, 1968) but it bears repeating.

The Report's insistence that construction of offices by the private sector be curbed sounds inexplicable unless the Panel wishes that the private sector personnel work in the open air. And, in any case, it is the public sector which is prone to lavish expenditure on this score. The Rs 10 lakh monstrosities of statues disfiguring the gates of the New Delhi Reserve Bank office at Parliament Street and, more recently, the commissioning of a painter to draw a Rs 50,000 mural for the Railways, indicate that the Panel is barking up the wrong tree.

Steep Taxation

Section III of the Report, dealing with Fiscal Measures, is generally good but there are a few major errors.

Para 19 The value of all rural property being included in wealth neglects the riskiness of Indian agriculture, and the fact that the majority of our 70-million cultivator families possess slender means. In this connection, I would suggest: (a) an *ad valorem* tax on rural houses, and (b) land taxes *graded* so as to make the effective tax rate higher, the larger the farm is. This is, of course, a technical suggestion and I need not elaborate on it here.

Para 20: A steeply progressive wealth tax "higher than the average return on capital" would convert us all to paupers very quickly. Rather a foolish aim to promote. Also, the concept of the "average return on capital" is going to mean that those indulging in the most profitable occupations will pay less tax than those in unprofitable occupations.

As the most profitable occupation is not necessarily the best for the nation as a whole for example, rayon and synthetic

fibre smuggling is highly profitable but bad for the nation), I do not see why the people indulging in them should get progressively better off than the rest.

Para 23 (v). If the suggestion that creditworthiness based on property should be replaced by those relating to the "personal integrity" of the borrower be faithfully implemented, the way is open for massive corruption in the giving of loans. For minimising such corruption, *objective* criteria are a must for bankers to judge creditworthiness, and the criterion proposed by the Panel is workable only if Physiognomy (the science of predicting one's character on the basis of one's physical, particularly facial, structure) becomes an exact discipline.

The uplift of the poor is best left to *special* agencies such as the Small Farmers Development Agency recommended by B Venkatappaiah. If ordinarily institutions are given too many (and often conflicting) objectives, the result will be confusion.

Para 24: The capital levy proposal, calling for a high and progressive levy on all property above Rs 500,000 is a dangerous one. The result of this will be (a) an intensification of capital consumption, (b) lack of fresh investment, and (c) intensification of wasteful expenditure. Instead of an omnibus levy, a specific set of levies on certain types of capital, such as jewellery, is preferable, but this is administratively difficult to implement.

Laudatory Recommendations

Para 27 This states that public trusts should be prohibited from investing except in Government securities. Several trusts (like the various Tata ones) are doing good work, and it would not be sensible to restrict thus their income. A close watch could, of course, be kept on trusts to see that they are in fact performing their stated functions, but this is not the same thing as the particular suggestion of the Panel.

Para 30 This provides for an annual cess of Rs 500 and Rs 1000 per private and corporate car, respectively, "to develop" the transport system. I would

suggest a tax graded according to the petrol consumption of the car that is, a car consuming more petrol per mile should be charged much more than a car consuming less petrol. This would reduce our craze for imported vehicles to some extent, and would make the above cess more equitable.

The paragraphs in this section dealing with the need to expand transport facilities (para 30 *passim*) change the Banking Commission personnel and terms of reference, formulate a credit plan, ban forward trading, improve the working of the Tariff Commission, and restrict company advertisements are laudatory. There are two recommendations, however, which may *at present* cause more harm than good to the economy, and this is that General Insurance be taken over by the State and the unit for income-tax assessment be changed from the individual to the family.

Inevitable Lopsidedness

The paras dealing with the need to (a) introduce compulsory life insurance for workers, and (b) provide nutritional food to all children up to the age of six (vide paras 25-26), are utopian and the administrative cost would be heavy, with results poor.

I remember once visiting the home of a leading politician in a southern district, and finding a whole room of his mansion stacked with old peckages of condensed milk for children given by a charity organization, lying undistributed. The execution of a countrywide campaign to provide good food to the young is impossible except if the Administration improves tremendously.

Section IV is all too brief, covering only three quarters of a page and deals with financial institutions. The recommendations that the personnel be competent and that Plan priorities be adhered to are somewhat stale. As for providing "special assistance to backward regions" economic balance does not mean equalisation of industrial density throughout the country.

A certain lopsidedness is inevitable in a developing economy,

as regions specialise in particular industries, and this should cause no worry so long as there is free mobility between regions. Generally, I disapprove of any abrupt departure from normal business principles, for these often lead to chaos.

Para 31 (V) Proposal that cash loans can be converted into equity is silly. A lending institution needs a constant and circulating flow of funds for efficient working, and to render their success dependent on a volatile stock exchange is hardly desirable.

The recommendation that Government Directors be appointed to companies is good, but these directors ought not to be mere dummies as has largely been the case so far.

The recommendation that there should be an agency to "regulate and co-ordinate" the various financial institutions will lead to inefficiency and absence of prompt action. The best body for such regulation is the Finance Ministry, and, but for its periodic control via the Budget, the institutions should be autonomous and bound only by the priorities assigned to each of them.

The main theme of Section V dealing with the Industrial Sector appears to be "nationalisation here and now". Readers of MAINSTREAM must by now be fully aware of my reasons for not supporting any proposal for nationalisation unless in extraordinary cases.

Crash Plan

The paragraph dealing with (a) the need to restrict the scope of foreign collaboration to spheres where Indian expertise is in existence, (b) improving the methods of functioning of the public sector through more autonomy, and (c) handing plants to efficient men, deserve immediate implementation. The suggestion that Parliament should not bother too much about the working of the public companies (34, XV) is against the democratic spirit and ought never to have been made.

The suggestions that the pricing policies of the public sector be more rational, that the textile

mills cut costs, and that our steel capacity be expanded are laudable.

As to the suggestion that imports of cotton for domestic textile manufacture be curbed and a "crash plan" be made to grow more cotton (high quality, of course), I can only say, "Does the Panel wish us to dress in fig leaves? (as most of us will be too poor to purchase the cotton textiles made more costly by scarcity). As for the crash plan to grow more cotton, such crash plans (at least in India) are inevitable failures, unless the Panel has miraculously discovered a way of growing long-staple cotton in a matter of hours.

One does not expect to hear a special panel say that industrial productivity be raised or that management be professionalised. These are obvious things. And one cannot understand the rationale behind the suggestion that medium and agro-industries (a category which includes 90 per cent of our industrial structure) be reserved for co-operatives and "new" entrepreneurs. What on earth are "new" entrepreneurs? People who have no skill in the job?

The section on Unemployment (Section VI) says nothing which is new and only one thing which is outrageous: that a Rs 250 crore Commission be set up "to continuously review and propose measures for expansion of employment opportunities for the unemployed and the under-employed". What on earth is the Planning Commission for, that we should still have to waste Rs 250 crores on a duplicate body?

The suggestions regarding rural electrification and rural works are not new (see, for instance, my article in the last MAINSTREAM annual), but I suppose their re-mentioning may push the Government into action regarding their implementation.

The Section on Agriculture and the Rural Sector (VII) repeat well-worn formulas. The humorous recommendations (humorous from the point of view of practicability) include the suggestion that all intermediaries should be eliminated before

1971 (so easy!) The suggestion for a betterment levy is a good one, but the move to raise the price of fertilisers is some what premature, as witness the fact that fertiliser use has dropped sharply this year in several States.

Big farmers being given fertilizers at a higher price than smaller ones is all right where pure theory is concerned, but how are you going to prevent the small farmer from reselling his fertilisers to the big one, and similar malpractices?

Impractical Suggestion

The gist of the last Section (VIII) on Foreign Trade and Regional Imbalances (what a combination of subjects!), is that imports as well as exports should be speedily nationalised. I have presented the case against this in the MAINSTREAM of December 27, 1969.

The suggestion that tea exports be nationalised is worthwhile only if (a) it results in a lower selling price for tea abroad, (b) the Government does its job efficiently in the various actions, and (c) we do not lose our foreign markets, particularly the UK one, in retaliation for this step. As a combination of these three events is unlikely, this suggestion does not have practical utility.

Regarding the idea that jute exports be nationalised, (the Panel, naturally, does not say why), an economist unfamiliar with our politics would conclude that the Panel is composed of great friends of our jute magnates. For the overseas market for jute is being rapidly eroded by the emergence of rival packing fibres, bulk deliveries and the better quality of East Pakistan jute, and so all that the Government will gain is a gigantic headache without any benefit accruing therefrom.

I leave the reader to draw his own conclusions about this Report. All I have to say is that if the ruling Congress wants (in Sri Chavan's neat phrase) to redeem the many substantial cheques it has given to the public for cashing in the form of tall promises, then it had rather do much better than what the AICC (ruling Congress) Panel has done.

Foreign Trade and Economic Growth

K. ARAVINDAKSHAN

THE record of the Government of India in the sphere of economic policy till date makes depressing reading. It has been characterised more by smug complacency and short-sightedness than by pragmatism and willingness to call a spade a spade. Time and again, rational economic thinkers have warned the Government against the tendency to succumb to a take-it-easy attitude towards vital economic issues which have a bearing on accelerating economic growth in a developing economy.

This tendency has been particularly pronounced in the case of the Government's overall approach to the intimate relation that existed between foreign trade and economic growth. The Government is yet to realise the fact that the import-export policy of a developing economy is not a matter of academic importance. Nor is it a question of semantics. It is rather something which will, in the long run, tell upon the nation's self-respect and economic independence.

Widening Gulf

In the context of the present world economic situation, one need not dilate upon the importance of a well-conceived and far-sighted export strategy. All world forums do recognise this truth nowadays though they fail to act upon it. The role of trade in economic growth has, in fact, been the main theme of the UNCTAD ever since its inception and it is more so now, owing to the widening gulf between the rich and the poor nations of the world.

Dr Raoul Prebisch who was the then Secretary-General of the UNCTAD, in his Report to the Geneva Conference of this organisation as early as 1964, exposed the ramifications of the problem in the following words: "The prospects facing the developing countries are grave indeed. Development is turning inwards in the countries that have made more headway in the industrialisation process, it is closing itself more and more in water-tight compartments, and the same thing will happen in the others, the less advanced, if they too have to become industrialised within the narrow confines of their national markets. What is more, these countries in general, and the less advanced of them in particular, are not obtaining sufficient financial resources from abroad.

These resources are indispensable for breaking that other vicious circle in which incomes are low because the investments are inadequate because incomes are precarious" (*The Decade of Development—Problems and Issues*, Luther H. Evans, p. 49).

The UNCTAD-II which met in New Delhi in 1968 sought to break this vicious circle. But it did not make any break-through in this direction due to the organised opposition from the advanced nations.

Though the UNCTAD-II failed miserably to reckon with the problems of the developing countries, it has brought home the point that dependence on foreign aid, however tempting it may appear to be, will be suicidal and that the emphasis hereafter must shift from aid to trade.

The urgency to look inwards to one's own resources instead of approaching the advanced nations, of whatever hues, with "a begging bowl", has been well brought out by Azerdo da Silveira, the leader of the Brazilian delegation to the UNCTAD-II. "The balance-sheet (of UNCTAD-II) is dismal... Never was a conference so vitally important to so many men and women around the world. And never have so many hopes been brutally wrecked. The full implications of the failure cannot yet be assessed. We can say this: the aftermath of the defeat (of the developing countries) is likely to be bitter and far-reaching in its consequences. The developing countries should stand together or perish" (*UNCTAD and Developing Countries*, Pauly V. Parakkal, a CPI Publication, p. 34).

A New Strategy

This forthright statement, coming as it does from one of the leading members of the "Group of 77"*—the organisation of developing nations—contains a clear-out warning to all developing nations, particularly to India which at present stands in the midst of an economic dilemma created by the delayed operation of the Fourth Plan with its loudly proclaimed objective of "growth with stability".

The achievement of the Fourth Plan target of seven per cent in the growth rate of exports which is expected to pay for our imports and wipe out completely our debt obligations by 1980-81, depends upon the careful formulation and vigorous imple-

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After UNCTAD-II, the number of countries of this group has gone up to 86, though the old name is still retained.

mentation of a new export strategy. While at the international level, the projected growth rate of exports would still be not more than two per cent of the world exports, at the national level it would mean a tremendous achievement

However, the recent indications are that even this rate will be very difficult to achieve. Those who had cautioned the Government some time ago against unduly optimistic forecasts on the export front, have now been proved correct. It is now being admitted, though reluctantly, that the spectacular rise in exports, from 3.75 per cent in 1967-68 to 13.1 per cent in 1968-69, has been the aftermath of delayed benefits of devaluation and that the part played by export promotion measures has only been secondary. The euphoria created by this temporary export spurt really blinded the policy-makers in the Foreign Trade Ministry who interpreted it as the economy having at last been taken out of the woods.

Thanks to the gross miscalculations of the authorities, the April-October figures, which are really disturbing, show that rate of growth has only been just two per cent over that of the previous year.

World-Trade Share

The Economic Times (December 26, 1969) places the value of exports during the first seven months of 1969 at Rs 817.24 crores against Rs 800.52 crores in the corresponding period in 1968. At the same time, imports have come down from Rs 1106.51 crores in April-October 1968 to Rs 902.88 crores during the same period in 1969. From these figures the conclusion that can be drawn is that the reduction in trade gap from Rs 305.99 crores in April-October 1968 to Rs 85.64 crores during the same period in 1969 has been more the result of a shrinkage in imports due to a larger domestic output of food-grains than the result of an expansion in exports.

Coming to brass-tacks, it must be admitted without any grain of salt that the gap between expectation and fulfilment on the export front remains as wide as, if not wider than, before, tall claims to the contrary notwithstanding.

The story of India's share in world trade is none too edifying. According to a report recently released by the International Monetary Fund, India has slipped in international export ranking, and now stands twenty-second when compared to the fifteenth position she enjoyed eight years ago. Our share in world trade has been steadily on the decline since 1960. While our share in imports fell from 1.7 per cent in 1960 to 1.0 per cent in 1968, our share in exports came down from 1.1 per cent to 0.7 per cent during the same period.

Japan, on the other hand, has been in a really enviable position with about a three-fold rise in exports during the last eight years. During the last five years, the real growth rate of Japan has been consistently above 10 per cent while her balance of payments surplus has been 1.5 billion dollars. These two indices of growth are expected to rise to 12 per cent and 2.2 billion dollars, respectively.

Many reasons have been adduced for the peculiar pattern of India's trade. The fall in our imports

has been due to the faster economic growth in the rest of the world, extensive liberalisation of *inter se* trade of developed countries, the active pursuit of a policy of import substitution by India and our persistent foreign exchange difficulties which forced us to curtail our imports. Our exports have been declining because of factors such as the faster growth of exports from other countries, especially the developed countries, liberalisation of their *inter se* trade and the sluggishness of India's traditional export items like jute and tea.

Despite these disturbing and unreliable trends in the field of foreign trade, a lot of noise has been made until recently about the spurt in exports during 1968-69. Attractive catch phrases like "exports revolution" and "green revolution" were lavishly employed by the official spokesmen to create the impression that the Government had succeeded in achieving a real break-through in the economy.

But, once again, in May 1969, the Government came out with a tale of woe when, contrary to calculations, export earnings actually declined. Close on this came the study report of the UNCTAD which made the striking revelation that in the Fourth Plan period, international trade trends are likely to be far less buoyant than in the past. The Government was at its wit's end. It had no alternative but to restore all the export subsidies and incentives abolished at the time of devaluation. Devaluation, it was proved, was no cure-all to all the cumbrous export promotion measures—the point Government had so vehemently advanced in favour of the sell-out of the nation's self-respect to the West.

It was also realised, though belatedly, that the spurt in the export of engineering goods and steel was not the result of any marked rise in their productivity but the result of a phenomenal slackening of their domestic demand due to the prolongation of recessionary conditions. The moment domestic consumption started to rise, export figures also showed a downward trend.

Unrealistic Projection

It is interesting to note that as much as 63 per cent of the projected rate of growth of exports postulated by the Planning Commission during the Fourth Plan period is expected to flow from metals and metal-based manufactures, including engineering goods as well as chemicals and allied products. If at all the rate is to be attained, the production base of the economy must be sufficiently expanded particularly in the machines and machine-building sectors. But the Fourth Plan does not take adequate note of the factor. In the absence of proper spade-work required for the heavy industries, the entire super-structure erected on it is sure to collapse.

However, for the present, it must be conceded that the bulk of the exports have been accounted for by engineering goods. The value of such exports, excluding that of iron and steel, came to Rs 52.41 crores as per figures for April-October 1969, as against Rs 42.41 crores in the corresponding period of 1968. Out of the additional exports valued at

Rs 16 72 crores, engineering goods contributed Rs 10 00 crores. *The Economic Times* (December 26, 1969) reports that for the eleven months of 1969, engineering goods exports were valued at Rs 82 71 crores as against Rs 66 51 crores in January-November 1968.

This favourable trend is likely to continue and the engineering industry might get closer to the target of Rs 110 crores for 1969, other things remaining equal, because of the rising prices and world shortage of steel and non-ferrous metals. The recent surge in Reserve Bank's balances abroad suggests that income from exports is now rising at a very fast pace, despite the fall in export earnings from all items except those of engineering goods.

As for the traditional export items like tea and jute, they even now predominate in the field of export trade though at the moment they find themselves in a mess due to various factors—external as well as internal. For one thing, world prices of primary products as a whole are on the decline, especially those of tea, coffee, pepper, sugar and oil cakes. Naturally, the unit value of all these export earners will fall and hence their aggregate export-earning potential.

Added to this is the rising competition from our rivals in the world market which shows no sign of abatement despite our export promotion efforts. The jute industry is facing formidable competition from its counterpart in Pakistan, on the one hand, and from synthetic substitutes, on the other. India's tea industry is hardly able to survive the competition from Ceylon. The reasons for this miserable plight of the tea industry are the utter neglect of our tea plantations by the Government, continuing foreign grip on tea plantations whose nationalisation, though overdue, is being indefinitely postponed, and the completely outmoded marketing and cost structure of the industry.

The textile industry which can boast of its brilliant traditions, presents a dismal picture of its having to devise desperate measures to hold on to at least the existing markets. The industry finds it extremely difficult to cut across the trade barriers erected by the European Common Market countries and to withstand vigorous competition from Hong Kong.

Temporary Gimmick

Things being such, the much-publicised "Crash Export Plan" sought to be undertaken by the Ministry of Foreign Trade to attain the export targets prescribed for the current financial year, fails to carry conviction. It can at best be interpreted as a temporary gimmick to hide the acts of omission and commission of which the Government is guilty. The suggested figure of additional export valued at Rs 70 crores in the next three months through non-traditional items, is more a window-dressing operation aimed at avoiding irksome and inconvenient queries in Parliament, than a practical proposition.

Neither the exporters nor the well-informed public have been taken in by the perplexingly elaborate and ingeniously worded statements emanating from official spokesmen. The fact of the matter is

that the level of aggregate exports in 1969-70 may at the most come up to that of 1968-69 level and that too if the proposed export promotion measures are initiated in full.

The reasons for this note of pessimism are quite obvious. First, the present calculations put out by the Foreign Trade Ministry are based on the anticipated exports through the Hindustan Steel to Japan and other areas. This may emerge only by April or May, unless a miracle happens, because exports of engineering goods are unpredictable owing to the acute shortage of steel, alloys and non-ferrous metals. Therefore, the contribution by this sector depends on the extent of import of steel officially announced recently.

Secondly, frequent labour troubles and breakdown of work in the engineering industries mostly due to the adamant and uncompromising attitude of the management, may upset the entire calculations.

Procedural Wranglings

Thirdly, there is the problem of red-tapism and undue procedural wranglings which prevent various firms from canvassing orders from abroad, despite the existence of much idle capacity in many units.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the record of the public sector plants, not only in their management but also in stepping up their output, has been far from being exemplary. The Hindustan Steel has once again incurred a heavy loss to the tune of Rs 39 91 crores during 1968-69, according to the annual report for the year presented to Parliament. This is only marginally lower than the previous year's loss of Rs 40 12 crores.

No responsible Government can remain passive to such erosion of the nation's resources for long, especially at a time when the neo-socialists moving under the brand name of the "Syndicate" are carrying on a campaign of calumny against the very concept of the public sector.

Equally grave is the problem of transport bottlenecks which may cause a serious obstacle to the exporters. This is as vital a hindrance to export promotion measures as the shortage of critical raw materials.

Lastly, it is high time the Government cried a halt to the practice of shilly-shallying with the persistent demand for nationalisation of foreign trade so that the racketeering lavishly practised by private importers and exporters through under-invoicing of exports and over-invoicing of imports, involving losses to the extent of about Rs 400 crores per annum, can be avoided. The decision to nationalise the import of raw-materials can solve the problem only partially. A series of wishy-washy statements to boost up exports without adequate courage to translate them into actual practice will not carry the nation anywhere.

The inescapable conclusion we have to draw from all these is that the so-called "exports revolution" and "crash export plan" announced with so much of ostentation, may become a wild goose chase unless the Government makes an all out effort to devise the necessary follow-up measures.

Lenin's Fight against Sectarianism in National-Colonial Movement

A. REZNIKOV

FOLLOWING the October Revolution, in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, Lenin advanced and scientifically substantiated fundamental, programmatic and tactical theses on the national-colonial question. In solving problems of the national-liberation struggles these have proved invaluable.

At the Second Congress of the Communist International held in 1920, Lenin subjected to merciless criticism petty-bourgeois views on the national-liberation movement that were alien to Marxism. Of particular worth is a little-known speech by Lenin at the July 25 sitting of the commission on national and colonial questions. Points he stressed were unity of the anti-imperialist forces, the role of the liberation movement in the world revolutionary process and the tasks of the communist movement in the East. These theses, advanced in addition to the *Preliminary Draft Theses on the National and the Colonial Questions*, permit a better understanding and estimation of his principled position on this matter.

The following is an extract from the account of this discussion and Lenin's speech

The commission on national and the colonial questions which discussed Lenin's these on these matters also heard reports by all commission members, delegates from Korea, China, India, Persia, Bulgaria, Hungary, America and Britain. These interesting reports would have filled a whole book.

The Indian nationalist movement began to assume more or less definite forms in the 1880s and found expression in the National Congress.

The movement embraced broad sections of the students and the middle classes, but the nationalists' call to fight for India's independence did not find a response among the popular masses.

The Indian people are not imbued with the nationalist spirit. They are interested exclusively in socio-economic questions. Their living conditions are extremely hard.

Since British capitalism established itself in India 80 per cent of the country's population who lived off the land have lost their possessions and become hired labourers. They now live like beggars. Although they till the soil, they are starving since

everything their labour produces is taken out of the country. These scores of millions of people have no interest at all in bourgeois-nationalist slogans, the only slogan that could interest them is "Land—to the Ploughman."

Compared with the agricultural proletariat the industrial proletariat is small in India. Workers total about five million. The trade union movement is spreading rapidly among these workers. The strike movement has been particularly strong in recent years. The first major strike, staged in 1905 by railway workers, reached the proportions of a real uprising.

These are elements in India from which a strong Communist Party could be built. Yet the revolutionary movement, as far as the broad masses are concerned, has nothing in common with the national-liberation movement.

On the basis of this analysis Comrade Roy concluded that the paragraph on the need for all Communist parties to help the bourgeois-democratic liberation movement in Eastern countries, from Item 11 of the theses on the national question, should be deleted. The Communist International should limit itself to starting and promoting the communist movement in India, while the Communist Party of India should concern itself exclusively with organizing broad popular masses to fight for their class interests.

Roy's Unjustified Views

Comrade Roy upheld the idea that the destiny of the revolutionary movement in Europe depended wholly on the course of revolution in the East. Unless revolution triumphed in the Oriental countries the communist movement in the West could be brought to nought. World capitalism drew its main resources and income from the colonies, mostly those in Asia. In the extreme case, the European capitalists may give all the surplus value to the workers and thus win them over by killing their revolutionary aspirations, while the capitalists themselves would go on exploiting Asia with the help of the proletariat. Such an outcome would suit the capitalists very well. In view of this it was necessary to direct efforts towards developing and promoting the revolutionary movement in the East and to accept the basic thesis that the destiny of world communism

depended on the triumph of communism in the East

Comrade Quelch of the British Communist Party disagreed with Comrade Roy, arguing that we must assist any anti-imperialist movement. Although the national-liberation movement in India probably had not yet won support from the broad popular masses this did not mean that it would not win it in the very near future.

Comrade Lenin also argued against Comrade Roy's view. He said that in Russia we supported the liberal movement during the fight against tsarism. The Indian Communists were bound to support the bourgeois-democratic movement without merging with it.¹ Comrade Roy went too far in claiming that the destiny of the West depended exclusively on the degree and strength of the revolutionary movement in the Eastern countries. Despite the fact that India had five million proletarians and 37 million landless peasants the Indian Communists had not been able to form a Communist Party. This alone made Comrade Roy's views largely unjustified.

Problems of a United Front

Lenin's speech was directed against Roy's attempt to revise the theoretical, programmatic and tactical principles formulated in the *Preliminary Draft Theses on the National and the Colonial Questions*. The initial text of Roy's "Supplementary Theses" contained the erroneous sectarian allegations that the bourgeois-democratic liberation movements did not reflect the strivings of the masses and that the masses did not support these movements, therefore, Roy maintained, the bourgeois-democratic stage of revolution was not obligatory in colonies and backward countries.

These sectarian views were vigorously opposed by Lenin, and the "Supplementary Theses" were submitted by the commission to the Congress in a revised form, incorporating Lenin's critical remarks on questions of principle. Nevertheless Roy continued to object in the commission to Lenin's conclusions.

The above materials of the commission on the national and colonial questions show that in his speech of July 25, 1920 Roy proceeded from the idea that the struggle for national independence and the social movement of the masses had nothing in common, accordingly he proposed to delete Item 1 of Thesis 11 of Lenin's "Preliminary Draft" on the need for Communists to support the bourgeois-democratic liberation movement in less developed countries. By doing so Roy objected to Item 5 of the same thesis which said that the Communist International must enter into a temporary alliance

¹There is an obvious misprint in the text of the account published in the "Bulletin of the Second Congress," which says that the Indian Communists are obliged to support the *bourgeois-communist* (emphasis is mine—A.R.) movement without merging with it. If we remember that Lenin objected to Roy's demand for the exclusion from Thesis 11 of the paragraph on the need for all Communist parties to help "the bourgeois-democratic liberation movement" in the Eastern countries, then there is no doubt that the bourgeois-democratic movement was meant.

with bourgeois democracy in the colonial and backward countries, but should not merge with it, and pointed to the need for a determined struggle against attempts to give a communist colouring to bourgeois-democratic liberation trends. In other words, Roy stubbornly rejected Lenin's thesis on the need to rally all anti-imperialist forces.

We may note that Roy was not alone at that time in opposing this fundamental thesis of Lenin. The remarks on the "Preliminary Draft" Lenin received from Ye. A. Preobrazhensky in June 1920 contained fundamental errors.

Preobrazhensky asserted that "it was wrong to overestimate the revolutionary significance of the national uprisings in the colonies," that the national-liberation movements of the oppressed peoples had no revolutionary prospects whatsoever. "The merchant bourgeoisie and the intelligent top of the people" in the economically backward countries, he wrote, "inevitably strive for the solution of the national question approximately in such forms as it was raised at the time of the formation of national-bourgeois states and thus become representatives of degenerate nationalism destined to perish without preparing gravediggers from among their own people."

The practical conclusions Preobrazhensky made from these premises were naturally harmful to the unity of the world anti-imperialist front. They were basically as follows: the proletariat of the Soviet republics would have to act as the "gravedigger of nationalism" in backward countries, "should it prove impossible to come to an economic agreement with the leading national groups they would inevitably have to be suppressed by force and the economically important areas would have to be annexed to the union of European republics for the period in which the labouring masses of the people were moving forward groups capable of taking power on the basis of a federation with Europe." It was from these positions that Preobrazhensky proposed to alter Lenin's 11th thesis.

Erroneous Leftist Views

In the final count both Preobrazhensky and Roy directed their efforts mainly against Lenin's conclusion on the need for unity of all anti-imperialist forces, their arguments being based on erroneous leftist views.

The pronouncement of Roy and Preobrazhensky which were objectively opposed to the formation of one anti-imperialist front both on the national and international scale met with objections of principle put forward by Lenin who believed that only by creating such a front could imperialism be defeated.

Lenin sharply censured Preobrazhensky's proposal for the victorious proletariat of the "European republics" to use violence against the "leading national groups" in backward countries, pointing out that it could not be proved and was wrong to say that suppression by force was inevitable. He maintained that such a statement was basically erroneous. Criticizing Preobrazhensky's view that after

the proletarian revolution "the solution of the national question should be subjugated to the task of building a single economic whole from the socialist republics", Lenin noted that simple subjugation was impossible and referred to his Thesis 12. In Thesis 12 of his "Preliminary Draft" Lenin pointed out that imperialist oppression left among the toiling masses of the colonial and dependent countries "distrust in the imperialist powers in general, even in their proletariat. These prejudices (of national egoism and national narrowmindedness—Ed) are bound to die very slowly. It is therefore the duty of the class-conscious communist proletariat of all countries to regard with particular caution and attention the survivals of national sentiments in countries and among nationalities which have been oppressed the longest; it is equally necessary to make certain concessions with a view to more rapidly overcoming this distrust and these prejudices."

Lenin believed that a correct, truly internationalist policy towards the formerly oppressed peoples of Russia was a powerful revolutionizing factor on the international plane. At the same time simple subjugation of the national question to economic tasks could result, as Lenin wrote, in that "all our international policy, all struggle 'for Asia' would go to the devil" and that in that case "we shall not be able to do anything against British imperialism (in Asia)."

A. Sultan-zade, a Congress delegate and one of the founders of the Communist Party of Iran, pointed in his written report, "The Prospects of Socialist Revolution in the East," to the ruthless colonial oppression of the Oriental peoples, the weakness of the working class in colonial and dependent countries, the lack of proper conditions for assimilating a class proletarian ideology, the acute contradictions between imperialism and the urban bourgeoisie of the oppressed countries, the harsh feudal rule ("the clinking of the fetters of feudal bondage can be heard everywhere in the East"). And yet Sultan-zade, like Roy, believed that socialist revolution was imminent in the East.

Having read Sultan-zade's report Lenin summed it up as follows: 1) Disintegration of the propertied exploiter classes (Sultan-zade wrote that some of them came out against imperialism—A.R.), 2) Most of the population are peasants living in conditions of medieval *exploitation*; 3) Petty craftsmen—in industry. Item of Lenin's notes read: "To adapt both Soviet institutions and the Communist Party (its composition, its special tasks) to the level of the peasant masses of the colonial East. This is essential. Should think it over and look for concrete answers." We should stress here that this conclusion belonged to Lenin, since Sultan-zade did not even raise the matters dealt with in Item 4 of Lenin's notes.

Of exceptional importance is the idea expressed by Lenin in June 1920 regarding a thesis advanced by G. V. Chicherin "Union with their own bourgeoisie," Chicherin wrote to Lenin, "is appropriate for the oppressed peoples only where they have to remove real feudalism propped by the bayonets of the oppressor nation, as is the case in Persia. The

Persians have on their agenda a joint movement of the working people and the bourgeoisie to get rid of the unbearable yoke of the feudals who have sold out to Britain." Lenin's comment to this was "Persia is not alone."

Lastly, in his speech in the commission in July 1920 Lenin said that just as the Bolsheviks in Russia supported the liberal movement during the struggle against tsarism, the Indian Communists "were bound to support the bourgeois-democratic movement without merging with it."

There was a concept at one time that Lenin's theses were intended only for extremely backward countries while those of Roy, allegedly independent of Lenin's, treated the national-colonial question as applicable to more advanced dependent countries and colonies. Yet it follows directly from the above-cited speech by Lenin in the commission that he strongly recommended the tactics of a united anti-imperialist front also for colonial countries whose capitalist development in 1920 was at a level that has not been reached by many former colonial countries in our time.¹

Lenin's statements, quoted above, had one common aim—to uphold his idea of a united front of all anti-imperialist forces with the proletarian (and communist) movement, remaining independent. The substitution adopted by the congress theses of the term "national-revolutionary" for "bourgeois-democratic" was made specifically in pursuance of this thesis. Lenin, drawing attention to the capitulatory stand of some sections of the bourgeoisie in the oppressed countries, declared that for a union to be possible between the communist and the bourgeois-democratic liberation movements, there must be real revolutionary attitudes on the part of those non-proletarian forces who would have communist support. Thus an idea of immense theoretical and practical significance came to the fore in the epoch of socialist revolutions: the national-liberation movement in no way becomes obsolete or reactionary in nature. On the contrary, a real opportunity opens before it, in the new conditions, for joint revolutionary actions with countries where the proletariat has been victorious and with Communist parties.

Revolutionary struggle has fully confirmed in practice the correctness of this conclusion and shown the harm resulting from underestimating it. Today it is regarded as natural and self-evident, but at the time this conclusion was a great scientific discovery and in 1920 Lenin had vehemently to defend his view against those who thought that the national-liberation movement had exhausted its revolutionary possibilities.

The concept which is called here "Roy's system of views" did not come about by accident. Such ideas were widely aired in the young communist movement, and all Roy did was to define them accurately. An explanation should be sought in the

¹In his speech at the plenary session of the 2nd Congress on July 26, 1920 Lenin specifically referred to "oppressed nations," "backward countries," "oppressed peoples," "colonial countries," "countries with pre-capitalist relations," "all colonies and backward countries."

concrete historical situation prevailing in the colonial and semi-colonial countries following the victorious October Revolution, in the specifics of the shaping of the communist movement in those countries.

A mighty upsurge of national-liberation struggle was taking place in the East and class-conscious activity by workers and peasants was increasing. The October Revolution had exerted a powerful revolutionizing influence on the progressive forces in the Eastern countries and a communist vanguard was emerging and gaining strength both ideologically and organizationally.

Yet many prominent leaders of the emerging Communist parties and groups came from the ranks of revolutionary nationalism. Their timid and inconsistent policy of the national-bourgeois forces produced an impression upon those leaders that the national-liberation movements lacked prospects. From this the conclusion was drawn that political independence could only be won through a socialist revolution, this being viewed as the immediate task of the Communist parties in all countries from the day of their inception. When they turned to Marxism, prompted by feelings of nationalism (and they were unable to accept it as a scientific system of views) these leaders, of whom Roy was typical, were frequently incapable of shaking off their old petty-bourgeois ideology. Added to this was the view, which prevailed in some young Communist parties in the colonial countries, that since communism was the embodiment of the ideals of working people, the very proclamation of its basic postulates would almost automatically win over the hundreds of millions whose interests it objectively reflected.

In the communist movement of the West the infantile disorder of "leftism" made itself felt at that time. The basic mistake of the "Left," both in West and East, was that they took "their wish," their ideological and political attitude, for objective reality, they regarded what was obsolete for them as obsolete for the masses. The experience of the Bolshevik party was frequently studied and used in a biased fashion. "The Left" in the West concentrated on the fact that the Bolsheviks had carried out the revolution in resolute struggle against the petty-bourgeois parties, while "the Left" in the East stressed the point that the liberal bourgeoisie in Russia had become an openly counter-revolutionary force and that democratic changes in Russia had become possible only through the victory of the socialist revolution.

Lenin's *Left-wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder* gave to the Communists of all countries a hand-book of Bolshevik experience, it also warned against the one-sided study and application of this experience. For Communists in the East of especial importance was the fact, noted by Lenin, that in the concrete situation of Russia the Bolsheviks had not refused to support the liberal bourgeoisie against tsarism, while they waged an irreconcilable ideological and political struggle against bourgeois liberalism and against any sign of its influence in the working-class movement. In *Left-wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder* Lenin described the long and strenuous struggle of the Bolshevik Party for the

masses, its mammoth work in educating the masses on the basis of their own political experience, its ability "to link itself with, to keep in close touch with, and to a certain extent, if you like, to merge with the broadest masses of the working people—primarily with the proletariat, *but also with the non-proletarian labouring masses.*"

Lenin firmly opposed the mechanical transfer of the tactical line of the Bolshevik Party operating in conditions of a politically independent country of medium-level capitalism to the oppressed Eastern countries whose economic and political development was immeasurably lower.

Placing a high estimation on the revolutionary enthusiasm and self-denial practised by the young Communists of the East, he saw the colossal prospects of the emerging movement they led and acted towards them as a considerate and wise instructor.

The Role and Place of the Liberation Movement of the Oppressed Nations in the World Revolutionary Process

Lenin's idea of the unity of proletarians of all lands and oppressed nations in the struggle against imperialism, set forth in the Preliminary Draft Theses met with the understanding and support of the overwhelming majority of the 2nd Congress delegates and members of the commission on national and colonial questions.

In the final version of the "Supplementary Theses" Roy's idea that "the overthrow of the capitalist system is not feasible without crushing colonial domination" was replaced by the thesis that "the destruction of colonial rule, coupled with a proletarian revolution in the metropolitan countries, will overthrow the capitalist system in Europe." Emphasis was laid on the need for joint action by the proletariat in the metropolitan countries and the revolutionary, anti-imperialist forces in the colonies. The Commission pointed out that "the Third International is a militant organization which should undertake the task of uniting the revolutionary forces of all countries of the world."

(To be continued)

Beef In Ancient India

by

RAJA RAJENDRALALA MITRA

Being a reprint of Chapter VI of the author's book *Indo-Aryans* Vol I, published originally in 1881

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Towards Freedom—Or Fascism

I. F. STONE

IN the middle of this decade, in 1976, we will celebrate the 200th anniversary of independence. There has never been so much doubt whether on that birthday, the United States will still be free

The decade may see a resurgence of Fascism in many countries, as the pendulum swings from the permissive to the repressive. A healthy society requires a balance of freedom with order, and of social change with stability. Everywhere in the world this balance has become more difficult to achieve, as population explodes and life becomes more complex. This breeds violence and frustration, as it does when too many animals are pushed into one cage. Hence the snarling and the quarreling.

Critical of Pentagon

In our country, on top of the universal problems of pollution, urban sprawl and youthful alienation, we are beginning to harvest in a spreading black revolt the bitter fruit of a century of slavery and another century of humiliation. We cannot cope with these interlocking problems unless in the next few years we can raise sharply the level of political understanding and social sympathy and convince the well-to-do majority of the need to forego private luxury in order to wipe out public squalor.

Over the past few years a series of high level commissions of inquiry has tried to further this task of public education. The latest is the commission on violence appointed 18 months ago after the assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. Its final report says

again what so many earlier reports have said—that the way to eradicate crime and violence is to eradicate poverty and racial discrimination.

The commission included men as conservative as Senator Hruska, Congressman Hale Boggs of Louisiana, and Cardinal Cooke of New York, military vicar of the US Armed Forces. "As a first step" they called for a reversal of the priorities which have given the military establishment first call on the national resources. Yet even as the report was issued the tides were moving in the opposite direction.

Not a single direct word of comment or even thanks came from Mr. Nixon when the report was presented to him. The chairman, Dr. Milton Eisenhower, could announce only that the President had "authorized" him to say he was "gravely concerned" and would "study it with care." The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains four separate speeches and interviews given by Mr. Nixon that week on football, but not one word about the violence report.

The Commission proposed that the government increase welfare expenditures by about \$20 billion, partly from a "peace dividend" of reduced military expenditure after Vietnam, partly from increased tax revenues as the Gross National Product grows. But Mr. Nixon had already shown at a press conference a few days earlier how foreign such calculations are to his basic thinking.

A reporter asked the President's comment on the statement that there didn't seem much prospect of a peace dividend after

Vietnam, but that this rich country could provide all the funds necessary "for the very big problems at home" any time it was prepared to make the necessary sacrifices so "we might very well do it now and get on with the job".

Mr. Nixon did not dispute the statement that the end of the Vietnam war would not release substantial funds for domestic needs—a significant key to his own planning. Nor did he deny that we had ample wealth to meet domestic problems. He took a very different tack, one that seemed to foreclose hope. He said Federal, State and local taxes already take 25 to 37 per cent of the nation's total income (30 per cent is the usual estimate), and that to take more would mean that the nation would lose "its character of a free enterprise economy".

Vintage Republicanism

This was saying that the maintenance of the "free enterprise system" takes precedence even over social problems that may tear the country apart. He implied that if necessary poverty must go on so that profit can thrive. This is vintage Republicanism. It is also the sombre diagnosis of Marxism-Leninism. No radical has said anything more subversive than Mr. Nixon's few unfeeling words.

All this runs directly contrary to the best advice of the violence commission and its predecessors. The so-called Southern strategy which has led wags here to call the Nixon White House Uncle Strom's Cabin is more than Southern. It aims to mobilize the smug against the concerned, the unthinking wealthy against the despairing poor, bewildered middle age against idealistic youth, and bigoted whites against desperate blacks.

This strategy may indeed put Wallace out of the running in 1972, as it is intended to do, and let Nixon ride triumphantly back into power on an undivided Know Nothing vote. But the cost in social turmoil will be high and the price may make the US in 1976 a police state like South

Africa. Here as there the price of racial repression must prove to be everybody's freedom.

Seen through the eyes of the blacks, the events of the year end are sinister. The effort to get rid of the 1965 Voting Act and to slow down school desegregation looks like a second post-Reconstruction era, an attempt to solidify white supremacy again in the South. Law-and-order seems to translate itself in this Administration only into black repression.

In New York City a US Attorney who has been vigorously prosecuting white collar crime is under White House pressure to get out just as his investigations touch financial interests involved in Saigon black marketing and the Mafia's Swiss bank operations. Crime in the banks arouse no such passion as crime in the streets. Worst of all is the trigger-happy lawlessness of the police themselves as demonstrated in the Black Panther killings in Chicago and the shoot-out in Los Angeles. These have stirred terrible fears.

The Black Panther raids have sent seismic tremors through a black community which has hitherto had little sympathy with this revolutionary fringe. It is amazing how many blacks are obsessed with what happened to the Jews in Germany. They fear—however horrible this may sound to decent whites—a similar fate.

They see the Black Panther affair in a long perspective. For two centuries, under slavery and after, the militant has been the special target of harassment and killing. In the ghettos today too many policemen treat suspected militants with a hatred they rarely show drug peddlers or pimps.

The Chicago killings look like the climax in a series of "search and destroy" operations designed to wipe out the Panthers and as a first step—however wildly exaggerated that may sound—toward genocide should blacks insist on their rights.

If this fear of a bloody confrontation and a "final solution" Nazi-style be paranoia, it is up to the white community to dispel it. For these fears are a menace to our common future.

Normal politics will no longer do. Normal politics is the Southern strategy. Normal politics is the new tax bill, in which both parties compete to give tax relief when we require a sharp increase in taxing and spending.

We need a campaign of public education, reaching into every town and village, carrying to town meetings across the country the findings and the recommendations of the Kerner commission and the Eisenhower violence commission and all the other sober counsels of recent years. We need to convert a benighted into an enlightened majority.

We need a small army of youthful Thomas Jeffersons to bring home again the lessons of freedom and of social change as

the Farmer of the Declaration so well understood them. We need a mobilization to make us realize that whatever our differences we are trapped together, breathing the same air, drinking the same water, walking the same streets. The rich could buy no finer luxury than to pay the cost of keeping them clean and safe.

To wipe out poverty and racism would be to make America really secure. But to get the kind of planning and spending required we need a revolution in public understanding. No other revolution will work, for it is the comfortable majority itself which must be converted.

To bring that about is the truest challenge of the Seventies, a task worthy of our finest youth.

REPORT FROM BRITAIN

Prospects for the Left

SCHOFIELD CORYELL

"**W**E intend to bring socialism to Britain through the democratic process. It won't be easy, but we mean to try it—and it is something which has never yet *really* been tried, anywhere."

With these hopeful words, Russell Kerr—the robust, affable and deeply serious ex-RAF flyer who now, as the 48-year old MP for Feltham, Middlesex, is the Chairman of the Left-wing *Tribune* Group in the British House of Commons—expressed to me over a glass of beer in the Commons Lounge, the aims and intentions of those who consider themselves genuine Socialists within the rather conservative British Labour Party.

These "Left Labourites", some 35 in number, are now finding themselves increasingly at odds and frequently in direct conflict with the anti-labour and pro-imperialist orientations of the Wilson Labour Administration on

vital issues of foreign and domestic policy.

Of these issues, Vietnam was the latest to break out into the open as a result of the recent disclosures concerning American atrocities at Song My, which stirred up a hornet's nest in the unconditional support for the American war policy.

"On the Vietnam issue," remarked Kerr, "our position has been clear all along. All we ask is that the Labour Government apply in practice the wish repeatedly expressed by successive Labour Party conferences that the Government dissociate itself from the American war policy in Vietnam. We are for the implementation of the Geneva Accords which clearly calls for the re-unification of Vietnam and the withdrawal of all foreign troops from that country. The recent disclosures in the US about the Song My atrocities have added a new sense of urgency to these demands".

Kerr felt that the Wilson policy of full support for American imperialism's adventures in South-east Asia was the result—in large part—of the pressure exerted by the US as the price of financial support to the British economy

Vietnam is the symbol of a whole series of foreign policy issues on which Kerr and his friends of the Labour Left have to take a stand against the Wilson Government's fundamentally anti-socialist and anti-humanitarian attitudes

On the issue of the Biafra-Nigeria war, for example, Kerr believes that the British Government is backing the wrong horse. "The Government is supplying arms to Federal Nigeria, partly because it helps the arms industry and partly because it is politically opportunistic to be on the side of Nigeria, which is backed by a majority of the independent African regimes, who are fearful of secessionist movements within their own boundaries

"But I believe that the balance of justice is on the side of Biafra, which is fighting for its own freedom and independence—though I do not ignore the complexities of the situation, what with Portugal and South Africa in the picture supporting Biafra for reasons of their own."

On the burning issue of the apartheid regime of South Africa, whose all-white rugby teams have recently been the target of spirited anti-racist demonstrations in England, Kerr is far from satisfied with what he describes as the Government's "two-faced" policy.

"Wilson," he pointed out, "condemns apartheid in words, but encourages the trade between South Africa and Britain, and the extensive British investment in South Africa." This economic support—Kerr and many of his Left colleagues believe—helps apartheid thrive and prosper

On the Irish question, too—while generally concurring in the recent actions of the Labour Government—Kerr criticizes what he regards as the Government's tendency to yield to the threats of revolt by the Protestant ruling group in Ulster while underesti-

imating the determination of the Catholic minority to fight for its rights, if they are not respected

"The Government is so pre-occupied with the fear of a Protestant backlash that it forgets the very real possibility of a Catholic backlash, if the civil rights reforms are not real and substantial"

Kerr is also concerned lest the proposed new armed force in Ulster turn out, in practice, to be the reconstitution, under another name, of the Royal Ulster Constabulary whole extreme partisan violence earned it the hatred of the Catholic minority

Imperialist Policies

The foreign policies of the Wilson Administration—which at best represent no break with Toryism and, at worst, are a continuation of the old imperialist policies with a new wrapping—are, in the eyes of the Left, but one side of the coin. The other side is the consistently anti-labour orientation at home—an orientation symbolized by the Government's effort last Spring to push through an antistrike bill that was stymied only by the resistance of the workers and the unions, and their Left-wing spokesmen in Parliament

"The deflationary trend under the current Administration", commented Kerr, "is at the expense of the workers and their wages as well as things like the social services, housing and education. This policy—represented by budget cuts affecting school-lunches, eye-glasses, false teeth among others—leads naturally to acts of resistance by the working-class"

Kerr—a National Executive member of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs (ASTMS)—sees the current strike wave, involving the lowest paid workers such as garbage collectors, miners and now teachers, as a justified revolt by the most exploited categories. "In a jungle society, they have no choice but to fight for a better share of the produce", he commented

Kerr went on to outline the contours of a social and economic

policy that would be characterized by expanding expenditure on the social services, and for much-needed improvements in housing, health and education.

The Labour Left sees such a policy as a possibility only if combined with drastic cuts in overseas military expenditures, a break with US imperialism, more productive investments and a higher rate of economic growth, six per cent for example, instead of the present three per cent including, if need be, such measures as selective import controls, extended exchange controls and further tightening of the capital export regulations

Far beyond this proposed programme of social reform, Kerr sees the eventual possibility of actually advancing to socialism through the workings of the democratic Parliamentary process, despite the certain resistance, even illegal and extra-Parliamentary, of the Right-wing forces generally, and the economic powers-that-be.

To push through a genuine socialist programme—involving the massive transfer of wealth and power from the few to the nation as a whole—Kerr recognizes the need to counter-act such Right-wing opposition by an active mobilization of all the democratic, popular forces, including unions, co-operative societies, tenants leagues, and others

"We socialist MPs are a little more than the mouthpieces of a great social movement outside Parliament, in which the unions play a particularly vital role", he pointed out. In this connection Kerr stressed the strength of the "democratic traditions among the British people" as the key factor in the struggle for "democratic socialism".

Although the transition to socialism is not yet on the agenda in Britain, the Labour Left—and the progressive and radical social forces outside Parliament—have a tremendous immediate fight on their hands to make their ideals of social justice and egalitarianism prevail within the Labour Party, and to detach the British Labour Government from the war-chariot of American militarism. Kerr and his friends are bracing themselves for the task.

Quest for New Balance

K.M.P.

THE Recent Foreign Ministers meeting of the Association of South East Asian Nations at Carmeron Highlands in Malaysia was significant in the light of what is happening in the region today. The number of abortive military and political alliances in the region are many. SEATO, ASPAC and ASEAN, their objectives sounded impressive when they were formed, and since they were backed and supported by the imperialist powers, their primary purpose was to guarantee the continuity of the reactionary regimes in power.

True, the emphasis in all these alliances was on anti Communism, the Communist movement was treated as a world-wide conspiracy using force to overthrow governments and, therefore, great stress was laid on internal subversion. The fact that most of the countries of the region, whether South Vietnam or Thailand, Indonesia or Malaysia, are fighting guerillas, show a fundamental weakness which these alliances merely accentuated

American Predominance

Confident of American and Western support, these governments did little to meet the aspirations of the people. The revolt of the poor peasantry and the minority communities, whom the governments had failed to integrate into the nation, was branded as Communists, to be crushed if possible with American military assistance

For South-east Asia, the years of American predominance were the locust years. Instead of meeting the challenge posed by the problem of economic development and national integration, the leaders of the region spent their

energy in a futile attempt to stop the spread of revolutionary ideas by mouthing anti-Communist slogans

Yet, in these countries this period saw the emergence of a national bourgeoisie whose interests and aspirations came into conflict with that of the compradore class. They were capitalists who believed that the national resources should be exploited to enrich the national bourgeoisie and not the Americans. They found that the excessive dependence on the United States led to a suffocation of the national economy and stood in the way of economic and social development.

Split Bourgeoisie

The split in the bourgeoisie, and the slow but steady emergence of the nationalist sector as an independent political force, was bound to influence relations with the outside world. It is not that they are anti-American—their education, social background, class interests, all make them pro-West and pro-capitalist—but they feel that better relations with the socialist and neutral countries will enable them to better resist undue American pressure and follow a policy which suits the interests of the nationalist bourgeoisie.

It was this trend that has modified the anti-Communist fundamentalism of these states and led some of them to establish commercial and diplomatic relations with the Socialist countries, and even consider favourably the Soviet proposal for a collective Asian security pact

Two developments further strengthened this tendency. One was the remarkable failure of the most powerful capitalist state in

the world, deploying over half a million troops and the most sophisticated weapons to subdue a nationalist movement in South Vietnam, the other, crumbling of the puppet regime which the Americans had imposed on the people of South Vietnam.

This in itself would have been extremely significant but when the failure became generalised all over the region, the conclusion to be drawn became inescapable. The failure of the Governments in in Vientiane, Manila, Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur to deal with the nationalist guerillas and the constant increase in the guerilla strength, made the conclusion inevitable that foreign military assistance could not indefinitely prop up an unpopular regime

The Western powers too came to realise that South-east Asia could not be held in bondage, and the British announcement of withdrawal from Singapore and Malaysia came as a shock.

As the ruling clique was coming to realise that external aid was no remedy, the props were being moved, but as long as the United States was committed in Vietnam there was hope. The announcement of a phasad American withdrawal came as another shock, the governments in South-east Asia came face to face with stark reality.

Dullesian Tenet

The prospect was certainly not bright, and in the capitals of the ASEAN a rapid reappraisal of policy had to be made. Not that they have time, with the coming of Nixon into the White House, the United States itself has made a reappraisal of its policy. It has decided to take advantage of the Sino-Soviet quarrel and draw closer to China

Nixon belongs to the Dullesian generation for whom anti-Sovietism is a basic tenet and if a rapprochement with Peking could lead to a strengthening of his hand against the Soviet Union, he was willing to give it a try. His grand tour of Asia was significant. For, he underlined the need for self-dependence and the dangers of depending on others, while stressing that the United States

would honour its present commitments

The speeches were more addressed to the Chinese than to the leaders of South-east Asia, it was an invitation to accept a settlement in South-east Asia which will protect the interests of both the powers. This was preceded by certain relaxation of restrictions on travel and purchase of goods

The American intention was clear, but it took considerable time before the next significant move, affecting the future of South-east Asia, was announced. That was the resumption of the Warsaw talks between China and the United States after an interval of nearly two years. This was followed by a partial lifting of the embargo on trade with China

Japan's Role

While the United States was making gestures to China, it was at the same time persuading Japan to take on additional responsibilities in South-east Asia and the Pacific commensurate with its economic strength. The Sato-Nixon agreement finally settled the military and political role which Japan is to play. Washington's idea of propping up the region with Japanese strength, can now be tried out in detail

Most of the nations in South-east Asia are, however, suspicious of Japan. They know that Tokyo covets the raw materials of which they have in abundance and will sooner or later establish an economic stranglehold which will lead to political domination

They do not see Japan as an ally against China. They know that influential circles in the ruling liberal Democratic Party are working for closer economic and commercial ties with China. Since China has been a traditional market for Japanese goods, the Chinese may tempt Tokyo with the potentialities of the vast Chinese market.

In any case, with a Sino-American rapprochement in the offing, the possibility that Japan will be a serious counterweight to China in South-east Asia cannot be taken very seriously. On the other hand, the rapprochement will strengthen those elements in Japan who are insisting on closer relations with China

The South-east Asian nations are in a dilemma. Their policy of alliance with United States has not yielded the results they had expected. Some of them could have reached a settlement with China years ago but that would not solve their internal problems. Burma, even when its relations with China were friendly, had to fight the local Communists. Cambodia, in spite of friendly relations with Peking, is facing the red khmer

This normalisation of relations with China will not solve their internal problems. Peking can easily accept the condition of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries if it wants to normalise relations. The signing of the various Pancha Shila agreements has not stood in the way of aggression or interference. Normalisation of relations with Peking, while showing that American satellites are

following in Washington's footsteps, will not fundamentally change the political situation in South-east Asia

If the change in their China policy is the result of the relation that they had followed the wrong course in accepting American policies, it will show that political realism has at last dawned in South-east Asia. If this is correct—unfortunately, it does not seem to be so—these nations will devote their attention to the institutional, economic and social problems which constitute the real threat to their prosperity.

Peking's aggressive intention in this area is highly exaggerated. It is not even interested in social revolution and is willing to enter into alliances with reactionary military dictatorships provided its national interests are served. The Thai political leaders, the most opportunist and pragmatic in South-east Asia are fully aware of this and they will be quite willing to seek an agreement with China. However, such an agreement will be short-lived, for the unwillingness to carry out internal reforms will lead to growing unrest which will work to Peking's interest

The only course open to the countries of South-east Asia is to carry out the necessary reforms and have a collective security pact against external aggression. Normalisation with China will fail to save them as the American military alliance has failed, unless it is backed by political and social reforms. The ASEAN in its search for security is jumping from the fire into the frying pan

Mainstream Office

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Process has Begun

KRIPA SHANKAR

This discussion was initiated by Sri M Basavapunniah with his article, "Controversy over 'Class Differentiation' Within Indian Bourgeoisie" in MAINSTREAM of November 22, 1969. The other participants in the discussion so far were Sri Mohit Sen, Sri Arun Bose and Sri C. Rajeswara Rao.

THE Indian bourgeoisie which came to power in 1947, was not destined to have a long spell of rule on account of the fact that it came to power at the twilight of capitalism, when there was a period of general crisis of capitalism and a third of the world had gone out of the capitalist orbit.

The ruling class in India would not make a clean sweep of feudalism on account of its links with that class. Its links with imperialism also continued in the same fashion. Its dual role *vis-a-vis* imperialism is a well-known fact.

The inability of the Indian bourgeoisie on account of its class interest to make institutional changes in the economy doomed its uninterrupted growth. The crisis of the Indian economy soon began to manifest in a glaring manner. Senility overtook it even before its achieving youth. Even among the under-developed countries, India has the lowest growth rate.

There are certain peculiar features of the Indian bourgeoisie, as is the case with the bourgeoisie of other countries. The Indian bourgeoisie has grown out of trading bourgeoisie. The merchant-capital element is its very predominant feature. This imparts to it a peculiar non-enterprising character—more interested in maximising profits by speculative activities than by productive enterprises.

The symptoms of a deepening crisis appeared in the middle of the Third Plan. Agricultural production became stagnant after 1960-61 and industrial production began to taper off. There was a crisis of foreign exchange. Capital

investment in the economy declined. Recession soon set in with the peculiar combination of rising prices. The bourgeois world was at its wits end.

When the Indra Government devalued the Indian rupee by 57 per cent, the whole nation was stunned at this cold-blooded betrayal by the bourgeoisie. Devaluation was no remedy of the economic malaise yet it was resorted to at the behest of the imperialists. Those who entertained any doubt about the character of the Government were clear that the ruling bourgeoisie including its most reactionary section was in power.

Devaluation brought further complications and it became apparent to the ruling class that things could not continue in the old fashion for long. The wide discontent that was growing due to the failure on the economic front was manifesting itself in various movements that were erupting throughout the country.

The much "talked of green revolution" failed to halt the rise in prices even of foodgrains. In a lean agricultural year the situation can be well imagined when this is the situation in a bumper year.

The deteriorating economic situation created a cleavage in the bourgeoisie. One section is thinking in terms of giving up the democratic mask and to take to the Indian variety of fascism in collaboration with the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra Party by relying on communalism and its other obscurantist features.

The other section which is more shrewd and forward-looking, feels that the first alternative is no solution. In a multi-national and multi-lingual country

like India, a satisfactory variety of fascism suitable for all the sections of the upper bourgeoisie, is difficult to evolve. Nor does it find it possible to suppress the people by force for long in such a country with wide regional difference.

According to it, the present set up can get a new lease of life if the capitalist base is broadened by checking the increasing concentration of resources in fewer hands and dispersing it more widely. The nationalisation of banks has been undertaken with this end in view. If bank credits were made available in ample measure to the landholders and the middle bourgeoisie, agricultural and industrial production could be stepped up.

Misdirection of capital funds to speculative and non-productive activities by the banks has been to a large extent responsible for the shortage of investible funds to the agricultural sector as well as to productive enterprises. The credit expansion by the banks has led to inflationary spiral leading to serious distortions in the economy.

This section of the bourgeoisie feels that all the possibilities of capitalist growth have not yet been exhausted to throw away the democratic garb. By increasing state intervention in the economic sphere with a view to enlarge the production base as also to allow a little more share to the working class, a balance can be achieved.

The rising prices have eroded the purchasing power of the people resulting in slackening of demands of various wage goods. This section feels that a complete wage freeze may defeat its own purpose.

The crisis of the Indian economy has brought about the schism in the bourgeoisie regarding the path to be adopted to maintain its class rule. The present differentiation among it has to be viewed in this light.

It is no differentiation between monopoly and non-monopoly-section as such, in fact the representatives of both the sections are to be found in both the camps although the monopoly element is predominant, nay nearly exclusive, in the Syndicate camp.

But say that Smt Indira Gandhi is anti-monopolist will not be correct. Her actions of the post-bank nationalisation period corroborate it.

It should also not be forgotten that had Sri Giri's or Sri Jagjivan Ram's candidature been accepted by the Syndicate, she would have had no quarrel with them and things would have gone as usual.

But the present schism provides an opening for democratic advance. To what extent the monopoly elements can further be driven in the other camp depends, in the ultimate analysis, on the sweep of the mass movement for structural changes. In the absence of country-wide mass movements, the possibility cannot be ruled out that the warring groups might even compromise.

The key to the unfolding of a

clear cut process of differentiation lies in the intensification of mass movement and the unity of the toiling masses. A right reformist tendency of not relying on mass struggles and to seek the area of agreement by watering down the anti-monopolist measures in the minimum programme by the Left parties, has got to be strictly guarded against. Similarly, a negative attitude to the present split in the Congress as being of no consequence has got to be given up.

For, although the bourgeoisie has not been divided into monopoly and non-monopoly wings clearly yet, the process has begun, howsoever slowly, and the growing crisis together with the radicalisation of the masses through mass struggles will definitely lead to that eventuality.

the 20th Congress of the CPSU? It was also praised by almost all the leading Communist Parties including the Communist Party of China in 1956.

At another place, he arrives at a peculiar conclusion by saying "When neither the big bourgeoisie nor the landlords are in possession of the state power, according to them (that is, the CPI-SR), it goes without saying that it must be in the hands of the non-big bourgeoisie. Then the case of the Right Communists for a revolution boils down to a case of overthrowing the state power of the non big bourgeoisie, a class which has a place in the revolutionary front." This is clearly a case of over-simplification and yoking-together of phrases and words out of context.

CPI did not reduce the part played by the big bourgeoisie in the exercise of state power. This has been clearly explained by Sri Sen, Sri Bose and Sri Rajeswara Rao. If the simplification is a correct method, the CPI(M)'s attitude to the Indira Gandhi Government can also be condemned as anti-Marxist and opportunist. It said, while lending support to Smt Gandhi, that both the groups represented big bourgeoisie, that is, monopoly capitalist. But, if reactionary axis would plot to topple it, the CPI(M) would oppose that.

This means that Smt Gandhi's Government is by nature a non-reactionary monopoly capitalist—a term still unknown in Marxist terminology! Lenin equated monopoly capitalism and imperialism in the long run. Then, it seems, imperialists are not necessarily reactionaries, according to Sri Basavapunniah's party's logic.

Sri Basavapunniah describes the thesis of "National Democratic Revolution" as "absurd", "fantastic" and "bankrupt". I shall only refer to the line taken by the Vietnam Workers' Party when a broad Democratic National Front was what they strived for. President Ho Chi Minh wrote "This Front does not embrace only the Indochinese people but also progressive French residing in Indochina, not only toiling people but also the

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Creative vs Dogmatic

SANKAR RAY

QUITE a lot have come to light through the pens of well-known Marxists on the merits of analysing class differentiation within the Indian bourgeoisie which was initiated by Sri M. Basavapunniah. Whereas Sri Mohit Sen, Sri Arun Bose and Sri C. Rajeswara Rao are more or less in tune, Sri Basavapunniah is basically proponent of an entirely opposite view.

Sri Basavapunniah seemingly distorts the views expressed by the Communist Party of India. On the other hand, he has shifted his own views also. In 1964 he said that the conflicts and contradictions between the imperialists and native bourgeoisie in the context of democratic revolution was irreconcilable (Seventh Congress Document of CPI[M] No. 4).

In the same document he said, "The present state power in

India is vested in the hands of the bourgeoisie-landlord block led by the big native monopoly bourgeoisie which is having durable links and collaboration with the foreign imperialists."

But now he says that "the Indian bourgeoisie consists of two distinctly demarcated sections, namely, *big bourgeoisie and the non-big bourgeoisie* (italics added). So what has been "irreconcilable" during 1964 becomes "distinct" in 1969. This point is not at all minor or negligible from the viewpoint of ideological discourse.

Sri Basavapunniah takes up cudgels for the CPI Programme of 1951, which he says, "was acclaimed by several leading contingents of the world Communist movement as a piece of creative achievement." If appreciation of major leading parties serves as an indicator, why are they against

Decline of the Underground

KRANTI SEN

THE nature of the Naga problem has been slowly changing over the recent years—occasional sniping and ambushing by the armed hostiles notwithstanding—and these are the only “news” that emanate from Nagaland—the secessionist movement of the Underground is petering out.

The primary problem in Nagaland today is speedy economic development to improve the living conditions of the people and provide gainful employment to the large number of educated youth coming out of the schools and colleges every year.

Grave Danger

A failure on the economic front will be fraught with grave danger, as the frustrated youth will pose a potential threat to peace and political stability of the State. The secessionists pin their hope on the discontent of the younger generation to revive their sagging struggle for “sovereignty”.

Let us look at the facts. The population of Nagaland, according to the 1961 Census, is 3,69,200. It is claimed that the figure is lower than the actual, because the conditions were far from normal at the time of the Census, and the enumerators could hardly go to the areas which were the strongholds of the rebels.

According to one source, the actual population of Nagaland at the time of the 1961 Census was around 4.5 lakhs which would rise to five and a half to six lakhs by the next Census in 1971. With nearly 80,000 school and college going students in Nagaland even today, the State's

population should be at least four lakhs, at the ratio of one student per five persons, although all the children in the school-going age do not attend school.

So long as literacy was at a very low level, it was no problem for the authorities to provide employment to a handful of educated youth. A Naga graduate would become an SDO or a Circle Officer as a matter of course, and then rise gradually in the hierarchy. Those halcyon days are over. The number of available white-collar jobs is much smaller than the number of job-seekers, resulting in a keen competition among the candidates—a new phenomenon in Nagaland.

A redeeming feature of the Naga educated youth is that unlike their counterparts elsewhere in the country, they do not consider manual labour as *infra dig*. In fact, many of them, after completing their high school or college courses, go back to the villages and help the community in agriculture and other activities.

Transitory Phase

But this is a transitory phase and the situation is bound to change, sooner than later. For one thing, the hilly terrain in Nagaland cannot provide sufficient arable land, even though *Jhum* cultivation is being replaced by wet cultivation. Secondly, the Naga youth is fast becoming sophisticated, and the demand for white-collar jobs is on the increase.

However, there are serious limitations in the scope for further increase in Government

jobs. Therefore, new jobs have to be created by setting up industries based on local resources. The State Government is alive to the problem, as also the dangers inherent in it.

Chief Minister Hokishe Sema told me that during the Fourth Five Year Plan period, emphasis will be laid on developing industries and communications in Nagaland. Apart from some big industrial units, a number of small-scale industries like soap-making, lantern and umbrella manufacture, and plastic products, will be set up.

The State's Fourth Plan projects include a paper mill which will be located at Tuli in Mokokchung district, with a 1000-ton pulp per day capacity, using the abundantly growing bamboo in the State. The plant is expected to go into production towards the close of the Plan period. A sugar mill is proposed to be set up at Dimapur, to go into production in 1971. A khandsari plant is already functioning smoothly in Dimapur.

Cottage Industries

Lately, the Khadi and Village Industries Commission has also started showing interest in Nagaland. It has introduced improved methods of paddy husking, and five husking centres are currently running in and around Kohima. These centres are popular with the Naga women. The Commission proposes to start some other cottage industries in the State, like soap-making, bee-keeping, and weaving.

The Industrial Estate at Dimapur has so far no unit set up in it except the khandsari factory already mentioned. A number of industrial units are planned to be set up in the Dimapur estate during the Fourth Plan period.

While it is true that the major problem facing the State is more economic rather than political, and the Underground movement has ceased to be the challenge it once was, it would be a mistake to assume that the rebels are already a spent force or that they have lost all their “teeth”.

The strong desire of the Nagas for a period of continued peace and for uninterrupted development work in the State, is acting as the most powerful deterrent to the hostiles. It is the people rather than the security forces that have weakened the Underground movement by their refusal to provide food, shelter, men and money to the hostiles.

Powerful Deterrent

Even then, there is no denying the fact, that a large number of armed hostiles are still at large with substantial quantities of arms and ammunition in their possession. According to Sri Hokishe Sema, they number about five hundred—200 in the Angami area, another 200 in the Chakhesang area, and the rest in the Lotha and Ao areas. Some more hostiles are to be found in the Karen area of Burma.

The hostiles who returned from China, brought with them automatic guns, recoilless rifles and even medium mortars. They have been using the mortars off and on, more for purposes of propaganda than for serious engagements in hostilities. Some mortar shells were fired on Kohima town in the recent past. They caused little damage to the town, but made big news which told the world that the Underground was still very much alive.

A medium mortar has a bore calibre of 81 mm and a range of 5,000 yards. The shells weigh 20 lbs each. The whole thing weighs 150 kilos, but can be dismantled and carried easily. This information was given by a senior army officer when I asked him how the hostiles managed to carry such a heavy load through the thick forests and over the high hills.

Apart from sniping and ambushing of army patrols, the hostiles have committed barbarities on villagers also. Some village headmen and interpreters (of tribal dialects) were recently killed by them, as also some youngmen who refused to join the rebel ranks.

The security forces are on mopping-up operations in the

villages to capture arms and ammunition smuggled by the hostiles from Pakistan and China. The operation consists of surrounding a village, herding together the inhabitants at one place, and carrying out of house-to-house searches. These searches are claimed to have yielded good results.

Simultaneously, allegations have also been made by responsible persons against the security forces of having tortured innocents, including women, while carrying out the searches. Two lists, purporting to give the names of the victims together with the names of their villages, were given to me during my recent visit to Nagaland and Manipur. Ukhrul in Manipur is a Naga area and the Tangkhul Nagas of Ukhrul are alleged to have also been victims of "atrocities".

A statement signed by an ex-MLA of Manipur and a Tangkhul Naga leader alleges that security forces 'do not care if India's name is sullied by their actions. They go to the villages and start torturing the so-called suspects in all manners. There are instances when the Nagas have been made naked in the presence of the public including the womenfolk, and they have been given electric shock in the most sensitive parts of their bodies'. Similar allegations were made by Sri Kevichusa, President of the Opposition United Front, when I met him at Dimapur.

Propaganda Trick

I had an opportunity to discuss the matter with a senior army officer. He did not claim that the army personnel could never transgress the limits of law and commit undesirable acts, but he did claim that so far the charge of torture could not be proved in any of the cases referred to him.

On one occasion, a woman was killed and the incident was played up. But on inquiry, it was found that the woman belonged to the rebel "army" and held the rank of "lieutenant". She was in full uniform and was killed in an encounter. "How can a bullet distinguish a woman

from a man in a combat?" he asked me. (Incidentally, there are about 40 women in the Underground "army".) All this hullabaloo about torture, he said, was a propaganda trick of the Underground to stay the hands of the security forces in their search for hidden arms.

There may be some truth in this as also in the claim that the cases of alleged torture brought to the notice of the army authorities were found to be baseless on inquiry. However, allegations still continue to be made by responsible persons including by some belonging to the ruling party (one of the lists given to me is signed by an MLA of the ruling NNO). In fact, Chief Minister Hokishe Sema did admit that some excesses had been committed on innocent people, but added that appropriate action was being taken.

Emotional Integration

In the period before the cease-fire in Nagaland, people did suffer terribly due to the actions and counter-actions from both the sides, as if caught between a cross-fire. Apparently, a repetition of past mistakes will only alienate the sympathy of the Naga masses and undo whatever might have been achieved by way of emotional integration over the years and strengthen the hands of the Underground.

It would be a self-defeating exercise if in the drive against the hostiles, who are now organisationally divided, militarily demoralised and politically isolated, the common people are antagonised.

It needs to be pointed out here that their desire for peace and, therefore, opposition to the Underground, has NOT brought about a corresponding change in the Naga attitude towards India. It will take a long time before the average Naga discovers his identity as part of the Indian nation. Anything that disturbs, disrupts or delays this process will only help the secessionist cause.

Secession is still being championed by the "federal" faction

of the Nagas. (The pro-Phizo section of the Underground had set up the so-called "Federal Government of Nagaland", with its armed wing, the "Naga Federal Army", which later turned to China for arms and training.) The "federal" faction, despite suffering severe reverses, still continues to harp on the theme of Naga "sovereignty".

The Semas broke away from them on two issues: leadership of Phizo who fled to Britain and had since been living there as a British citizen, and collusion with China. On both the counts, the Semas were in the opposition. The Semas set up a parallel "Revolutionary Government" at Zungti (Mokokchung) and started cooperating with the security forces in the latter's drive against the "federal" group.

It was due to them that the self-styled "General" Mouw and his group could be captured within days of their return from China. They also raided the Chhedema camp of the "federal" group and kidnapped some top leaders like Mhiasi, the "President", and Ramyo, the "Home Minister" of the "Federal Government".

On the question of Naga "sovereignty", the stand of the Semas was no different from that of the other group. But by stages, they have come to accept certain "realities" and has let it be known that they no longer insist on "sovereignty". The process of the reversal of their stand makes interesting reading.

First, they said that a peaceful settlement should be found for the Naga problem, acceptable to both sides and acknowledged by the public. This stand was confirmed at a public meeting, and subsequently ratified by the Naga Public Conference at Kohima in August 1968.

Their next step was to request Dr Aram, the Sarvodaya representative on the Peace Observers' Team, to persuade New Delhi to resume negotiations and convey their written request to the Prime Minister. Dr Aram pointed out that their insistence on "sovereignty" being unacceptable to the Government of India, no useful purpose would be served by fresh

negotiations. Moreover, the earlier six rounds of talks with the "federal" group had proved abortive merely because of the Underground's insistence on "sovereignty".

It was then that the Semas for the first time said they would not insist on "sovereignty" and asked Dr Aram to make it public. Dr Aram also pointed out that the legally constituted and democratically elected State Government of Nagaland could not be by-passed in any future negotiations. Even New Delhi would not agree to that. This, too, was accepted by the Semas who wanted to come to some sort of an understanding with the State Government.

Thereupon, the State Government took the initiative to hold joint meetings with the two factions of the Underground (the Semas represented by the "Revolutionary Government" and the "federal" group). Three meetings took place in June, August and September, but the "federal" group boycotted them, and no fruitful decision could be taken.

The last meeting, therefore, appointed some "contact leaders" to get in touch with the "federal" leaders and persuade them to join the talks. But no contact could be established with them.

Why have the "federal" leaders gone into hiding again? Sri Hokishe Sema feels, it is because they cannot face the people, since they have not been able to live up to their promises. This appears to be a correct assessment. For one thing, the "federal" group lacks the strength, for another, the common Nagas will not tolerate the existing peaceful conditions to be disturbed.

One section of the informed opinion believes that there are no Nagas in China now. From the talks I had with circles close to the Underground at Kohima, I also got the impression that Peking was no longer enthusiastic about supplying the rebels with arms unless they were prepared to accept the ideological position of the Chinese.

According to these circles, the Chinese were putting greater emphasis on political indoctrination than on actual military train-

ing or help. The Naga rebels seemed obviously disappointed with the Chinese.

The organisational disarray of the "federal" group is not, however, an unmixed blessing. So long as the rebels were a disciplined body under a unified leadership, they could be expected to abide by the orders of their leaders. Now isolated groups are acting independently, with nobody to control them.

It was these groups that were responsible for the series of violent acts committed in July, August and November last year. In one case, a village headman and an interpreter were killed near Pfutsero. In September, several army patrols were ambushed and an attempt made to blow up a bridge at Zubza near Kohima. In two encounters at Rukruma and Ghaspani, three rebels were killed. The mortar fire on Kohima town was also the work of these desperadoes.

Stray incidents like these are likely to continue for some time more, until the rebels realise the futility of their action. Already groups of them have started surrendering to the security forces. Three rehabilitation camps have been set up at Meluri, Zunheboto and Tsemenyu. Here the former rebels are being helped to rehabilitate themselves in agriculture and other vocations.

As bulk of the hostiles are tough fighters, they can be easily trained to become good soldiers. A Naga regiment is proposed to be raised shortly which will absorb the former hostiles who have surrendered and are prepared to live as law-abiding citizens. Naga youth in general will also be recruited in the proposed regiment. It was gathered from Sri Hokishe Sema that the Army authorities have agreed to the proposal and the Central Government's approval is expected soon.

The military battle in Nagaland is all but over, but the economic battle has just begun. The future depends largely on how it is fought, how quickly and smoothly a backward tribal society is brought into the mainstream of the national life, while retaining its traditional values, mores and culture.

POSTURE AND PERSPECTIVE (Continued from page 12)

growth of parties. It is necessary to catch the thief's mother.

He did not favour the fighting of elections only through a front and not independently. "Do not show eagerness. Let us not be astrologers regarding the situation before or after the mid-term poll."

The Resolution on internal situation bears clear imprint of Sri Madhok's anti-Muslim viciousness. Its salient points are: There is an explosive situation due to riots, erosion of rule of law and attempts to subvert unity of the country and constitutional Government. The riots are started by that section of the Muslims who are still sticking to pre-1947 mentality with overt and covert abetment of CPI and CP(M) and a section of the Congress. The communally-motivated West Asia Policy of the Government of India has "further roused and strengthened extra-territorial loyalties among large sections of Indian Muslims." Pakistan has designs for another partition. Indira Government's dependence on the Muslim League and elements susceptible to communal and sectional appeal has given a new import to the problem. Communists have forged alliance with the League and pro-Pak elements. Unemployment and frustration aggravated by false hopes, are creating an ideal situation for Communist operation. Revival of nationalism—the sum total of cohesive forces, Indianisation of all those elements in body politics of India who have extraterritorial loyalties or owe allegiance "overtly or covertly" to "two-nation or multi-nation theory". Enact a law of Treason. Extend the Constitution to Kashmir.

Moving the resolution, Sri Yagya Datt Sharma said the Congress failed in 20 years to bring the separatist Muslim elements into the mainstream of Indian life. He mentioned Sri Chagla and Hamid Dalwai as openly wanting Indianisation of Muslims.

Seconding the Resolution, Sri Haripada Bharati asked Badshah Khan why he was not sorry over the thousands of Hindus massacred in Pakistan while he pained

about Ahmedabad and Jagatdal riots. "I am not for banning the Communists. We will fight them out in the battle-field. Bhasani has raised the slogan for Assam. We should retaliate by demanding East Bengal."

Quite a few in the discussion demanded action against missionaries. This demand was later accepted.

An MLA from Maharashtra asked for Vidarbha State. Sheikh Abdul Rahman (J & K) wanted the Congress to be condemned for its communal approach. He spoke at length and finally congratulated the Jana Sangh that there were no riots in the States where it was in Coalitions. He suggested that all Muslims should not be lumped together. Sri Vishwana than of Punjab sought to condemn Sant Fateh Singh's selfimmolation threat. Referring to an Punjab Akali Minister's threat of secession, he wanted that such persons should be debarred from any elective posts. (The issue was explained away).

A sentence which was deleted, raised the demand for "Indianisation" of Muslims. "This particularly applies to Indian Muslims because over 93 per cent of them voted for the Muslim League and Pakistan in the General Election of 1946 which preceded the partition of 1947. Indianisation of this section of Muslims is an imperative necessity for peace and unity of India."

At the instance of Sri Vajpayee, the mover explained that since the sentence was a matter of detail, he agreed to its deletion. Immediately a delegate raised a point 'Is it to placate Muslims?' There was tension all round.

Both Sri Vajpayee and Sri Yagya Datt Sharma took pains to emphasise that the basic demand is that of Indianisation which the party had never compromised. Omitting certain details did not change the fundamental demand. Sri Vajpayee went to the extent of saying "We do not suspect the patriotism of all Muslims, only a section of them have to be Indianised, Communists, many Hindus including among them the Europeanised

sections will also have to be Indianised. Jana Sangh is a platform for National Renaissance."

The Jana Sangh is now hopeful that following the emergence of the Syndicate as a sort of like-minded party in the political arena, irretrievably dependent on the Jana Sangh in its fight against the Prime Minister, the party will not only be able to break its isolation but also extend its base through a carefully chalked-out programme. This explains the Jana Sangh leadership's eagerness to politically and organisationally prepare the party and its allies in their strongholds for an early mid-term poll for Parliament.

The Patna session had the imprint of the organisational capacity of the party as well as its being held in a place where the party is yet young. The well-planned and organised Chanakya-nagar with two thousand and odd big and small tents proved their ability, while compared to their Bombay session, the Patna "Jaloos" was not only small but less organised.

The party claimed attendance of 20,758 delegates, including over two thousand women and a hundred Muslims. However, this strength had no relevance to the total party membership which had admittedly gone down by two lakhs compared to last year. The delegates' number on the other hand was claimed to be more than double of those at the Bombay Jana Sangh session eight months ago.

However, it is not its strength but its crucial political position in the present national alignments that has given the Jana Sangh leadership a new incentive as the most authentic voice of the militant Right.

KINDLY NOTE

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NON-CONGRESSISM

choice of a partner for them

On this score Smt Gandhi will be called upon to proclaim her choice. National sentiments have deep and compelling influence for combination. Indian masses are intensely patriotic as has been seen on many an occasion. In spite of protracted Congress misrule, the whole country stood firm behind an unpopular Congress regime during the last two foreign invasions.

Similarity of programme and approach to economic problems between Socialists and Communists cannot be a binding force at the cost of patriotism and national sovereignty. This is equally true of Left-wing Congressmen. Smt Gandhi won't ever be able to pull her rank and file in an alliance or adjustment with the Communists if the latter profess a non-conformist international line. Will the Communists of India be able to emerge as non-conformists like the Yugoslav Communists? If they do not, they will be suspect before the public eye. So will be their allies including Smt Gandhi and her friends. In this respect the Communists are on a great trial.

Non-Congressism needs another significant change and that is the mechanism of unity. The mechanism that was limited to mere adjustment of seats among non-Congress parties, badly needed to be changed into a united front based on common minimum programme.

Control of the Centre is no longer a matter of probability but certainty. In such circumstances different election manifestoes would not be able to create the necessary emotion in the country for obtaining a workable majority. The people are shrewd judge of political parties. They want to be convinced that a common programme for radical social change would be worked out by the next government. Secondly, the governments must have a workable majority.

Both these demands can only be met by a joint front of Left parties with a common minimum programme and a machinery for joint campaign. Without a joint

(Continued from page 14)

campaign from the same platform the necessary emotion cannot be roused. Failure in this regard will hurl the country into a series of unstable governments. India would be a second France. This must be avoided at all costs in the present circumstances.

This is an uphill task. The Socialists are on trial. The time is ripe for a new political orientation. They can make history if they can rise above pettiness and prejudice. They must have the imagination to rise to the historic occasion for building up a broad-based Left unity.

Gandhi in his last will advised the Congress leadership to dissolve the Congress and allow its membership to choose or build their party in the altered conditions. The Congress leadership did not pay heed to the leader's advice. Now they have split into two out of weakness.

Alignment of forces is in a state of flux. All the parties, big or small, are caught in the grip of veritable uncertainties. This peculiar phenomenon reflects serious creative unrest. Out of the womb of the brewing social crisis will emerge new alignments commensurate with the urge of the people.

DISCUSSION—SANKAR RAY

(Continued from page 33)

national bourgeoisie. The party must assume a wise, flexible attitude with the bourgeoisie, strive to draw it into the Front, win over the elements that can be won over and neutralise those who can be neutralised. We must by all means avoid leaving them outside the Front, lest they should fall into the hands of the enemy of the revolution and increase the strength of the reactionaries" (President Ho Chi Minh *Vietnam*; Cardinal Press, Calcutta, p. 99).

I do not know what he means by the words "absurd", etc., but as a well-known Marxist theoretician, we expect him to rethink about what he has said about the possibility of National Democratic Revolution. People's Democracy or National Democracy is a matter which has to be decided by the reality of life.

The approach of the CPI(M) towards the present political flux engulfing the entire national life is somewhat queer. At this stage, according to its 1964 understanding, conditions favourable to People's Democratic Revolution are remote. Broader preparations are necessary to achieve leadership of the working class over the revolutionary undertaking. National Democracy, on the other hand, prescribes no compulsory criterion like leadership of the working class in the National

Democratic Revolution, but lays down that through struggle the gradual ascension of working class to the helm of leadership will become a reality.

The succession of events since the last General Election have shown that the CPI's approach, that is, struggle towards National Democratic Revolution, is not unrealistic. Rather, People's Democratic Revolution does not seem to be feasible at least in the context of quick-changing scene of Indian national politics. CPI(M) tends to destroy the scope of National Democratic Revolution by misinterpreting the role of Indian bourgeoisie to the cadres.

It is wrong to assert that differentiation of ruling coterie has taken place. That is nothing but a split. Nevertheless, this split cannot be papered over. Sometime supporting the Syndicate-Jana-Sangh-Swatantra axis and sometime opposing them is nothing but opportunism.

All these are not to be forgotten specially in regard to Communists' reading of the Indian bourgeoisie. During the 6th Congress of the RSDLP, a Trotskyite motion was opposed by Stalin "There is dogmatic Marxism and creative Marxism. I stand by the latter." It is for Sri Basavapunniah to choose.

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SATURDAY, JANUARY 17, 1970

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SSP

Checkmate at Sonapur

CHANDIGARH

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RAJASTHAN STUDY : SCUTTling LAND REFORMS





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THE methods being employed by certain politicians in Punjab and Haryana to force a one-sided settlement of the dispute over Chandigarh have had the noticeable effect of rousing sectional and communal passions. The twists and turns the Chandigarh agitation has taken in the two States have only contributed to a setback for the supreme cause of national unity. Blinded by their own petty ambitions and jealousies, the politicians in the two States, particularly those occupying the seats of power, have failed to comprehend the extent of harm they are doing to the people of the two States as well as to the country by blowing up into an "emotional" issue a question that can best be resolved only by mutual negotiation and settlement on the basis of give and take.

There can be no doubt that the Akalis have contributed more than any other single faction to vitiating the atmosphere, although the moderates among them have tried hard to prevent the situation getting out of hand. The fatal fast of Darshan Singh Pheruman was a wholly unwarranted tragedy resulting from diabolical engineering by certain extremists among the Akalis on the one hand and sections of Congressmen out to exploit the situation to further their own political ambitions on the other. The self-immolation threat by Sant Fateh Singh, in the face of opposition from most of the political parties which are as much committed on the question as the Akalis are, is again a political move aimed at restoration of the leader's much-damaged "image" among the Sikh masses, which the various sections in Punjab politics are seeking to utilize for their own narrow purposes.

It would not, however, be fair to put the entire blame for the present ugly situation on the politicians of Punjab and Haryana, for the Union Government has by its vacillation and perpetual indecision made its own contribution to it. There were several stages at which it was possible for the Centre to have adopted a firm attitude and brought about a settlement acceptable to both sides. By placing party considerations above the national interest, the Centre only helped to harden feelings particularly in Haryana where the ruling party was at one stage fully reconciled to building a new Capital with assistance from the Union Government.

It is only now that the leadership at the Centre seems to have woken up to the dangers involved in

undue encouragement of parochial and communal overtones being given to what is not even a full-fledged territorial dispute between two States of the Union. While the 1961 census and the Shah Commission report added their quota of confusion, it was at no stage beyond the competence or capacity of the Centre to insist on a reasonable solution being hammered out by the two State Governments with its help. What the Prime Minister and the Home Minister are doing now, with the Sant's threat and Haryana reactions to it clouding the atmosphere, they could well have done much earlier with quicker results.

Chandigarh is not a problem that can be settled on a permanent and amicable basis by means of threats and bullying from one side or the other. Little more is involved in the present crisis than the fictitious prestige of certain leaders of the two States. If the extremists among the Akalis are pushing the Sant to the brink, it is the duty of leaders of public opinion in the State to save the Sant and isolate the extremists. Similarly, sober opinion in Haryana must assert itself against those groups which seek to give the issue a communal

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EDITOR : Nikhil Chakravartty

Views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and not necessarily of this journal

colour. Political parties which take a different position in each different area must be relentlessly exposed for the cynical hypocrites they are.

The Centre will be perfectly justified in demanding that all threats and blackmail must end and a peaceful atmosphere created before the problem can be settled. The Union Government is committed to taking a decision before the Budget session, and all

responsible leaders not only in the two States but all over the country must stir themselves to get all threats withdrawn in time to create the right atmosphere in which the Central and State leaders can sit down together and settle the problem finally. So long as threats like the Sant's poison the atmosphere, it is difficult to envisage reasonable progress towards a satisfactory solution.



SSP : Checkmate at Sonépur

HOISTING the SSP flag at the inauguration of the Party's special convention at Sonépur, Sri S M Joshi said "The Congress split and the break-up of its corrupt monopoly rule offers a unique opportunity to committed socialists like us, and if we waste it over petty internecine quarrels, history will not forgive us."

Yet the Sonépur Convention witnessed one of the stormiest sessions in the annals of Indian Socialists, so much so that at one stage the delegates came to blows. However, the issues over which they fought were not part of a petty, internecine quarrel, they essentially represented the struggle between those who held on to the old digts and those who wanted to move forward, taking into account the vastly changed reality of Indian politics today.

The status-quo posture was not dictated by merely hanging on to Dr Lohia's thesis of non-Congressism, in quite a few cases, the status-quo approach helped a section of leaders to strike a bargain with forces of vested interests, hoping thereby to share the spoils of office.

Despite all the tall talks against ministerial politics, there is little doubt that Sri Raj Narain's insistence on an entente with Sri C. B. Gupta in UP was dictated by his anxiety to get on to the bandwagon of those who are today ruling the administration in the State.

At the end of the Sonépur

Convention, the SSP leaders have claimed that not only the prophets of doom have been falsified, but that the party has emerged stronger from the Sonépur Convention. Such a fatuous claim has been made side by side with the warning against progressive journals—*Mainstream* not excluded—for having sought to divide the SSP by boosting one leader against another, a complaint which itself speaks for the precarious nature of the unity in leadership.

It took the SSP National Committee over 25 hours, spread over four days, and many sessions at Jamshedpur, Patna and finally at Sonépur, to bring about a patchwork political line which can mean different things to different people. But this could not be helped since this was the only means of keeping the party together.

Ironically enough, Dr Lohia's panacea of "non-Congressism" with which he had meant to forge the unity of all Opposition forces ranged against the Congress monopoly of power, has today become the instrument that has almost broken his own party, the SSP.

On the eve of Sonépur, the Party's General Secretary, Sri George Fernandes, writing in the Convention Souvenir volume, warned that "this is no time for us to be victims of illusion"; he spoke of an interregnum—the era of non-Congressism has come to an end though the actual overthrow of the Congress Government at the Centre and some

States is still to be accomplished.

And yet the ghost of non-Congressism haunted the SSP leaders throughout the Sonépur Convention. On the first day of the National Committee discussion on the political situation, the SSP Chairman, Sri Karpoori Thakur, and Sri George Fernandes were believed to have stressed that the essence of non-Congressism in the context of the Congress split lay in opposing both the Congress factions. Sri Thakur did not hesitate to tell the Press that "up to this day, I am opposed to both (the Congress factions)"—a position which was shared by Sri Ramanand Tiwari as well.

Against this, two other clear trends were visible. Sri Raj Narain, appearing to be carrying out Dr Lohia's behest of non-Congressism to its logical conclusion, wanted to be of service to the Syndicate by this logic, the Syndicate Congress should be treated as any other Opposition party, for it is opposed to the fountainhead of power, that is, the Central Government.

At the other end, Sri S M Joshi retorted that a party did not become revolutionary merely because it happened to be in the Opposition. Sri Joshi wanted that in the context of the Congress split and the isolation of the Syndicate, all forward-looking forces should unite, particularly all socialists. There was little doubt that he wanted a positive approach to Smt Indira Gandhi's present stand.

It was in this context of divergent viewpoints inside the SSP leadership that Sri Madhu Limaye appeared, throwing his weight on the side of Sri Raj Narain. Without Sri Limaye's support, Sri Raj Narain's crude kowtowing to Sri C.B. Gupta in UP would have been thoroughly exposed. The pro-Syndicatism of Sri Raj Narain was given the fig-leaf of respectability by the anti-Indiraism of Sri Madhu Limaye.

Moving the Political Resolution at the Convention, Sri Limaye emphasised that the ousting of the the Indira Government at the Centre was the chief task to be accomplished by all means, it is significant to note that whereas every other political entity, according to Sri Limaye's thesis, could be made into an ally of SSP provided it accepted a concrete time-bound programme—and this facility he was prepared to extend not only to Sri C.B. Gupta but even to the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra—no such “program-mism” was applicable in the case of Smt Indira Gandhi's Government.

It was clear in course of the Convention that the Raj-Narain line, had it been left to itself, would have been thrown out by the overwhelming majority of the delegates. It would not be wrong to presume that the dogged resistance put up by Sri Joshi and his like-minded colleagues in the Convention had almost threatened Sri Raj Narain's isolation.

However, when Sri Madhu Limaye joined hands with Sri Raj Narain, modifying the latter's stand, it was clear that the two together controlled the majority, and this made Sri Joshi's into a minority trend. About half a dozen centrist members pressed for making reasonable concessions to the points raised by the Joshi group.

It is to be noted that out of the six different drafts for the Political Resolution, Sri Madhu Limaye's draft which was at first made the basis for discussion at Jamshedpur, failed to bring about agreement. Next, the draft of the six-man sub-committee (including, besides Sri Limaye and Sri Raj Narain, Sri Ram Sevak Yadav, Sri Badri Bishal

Puri, Mama Baleshwar Dayal and Sri Fernandes) also failed to clinch the issues at the night-long session of the National Committee at Patna. Finally, the National Committee meeting at Sonapur itself managed to produce a draft embodying the common minimum agreement.

The Raj-Narain-Limaye combine had to pipe down and agree to a compromise not only with regard to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh but also to the Central sphere, but it was so ridden with loopholes that it left everybody to draw his own conclusions during the events to come.

In the revised version of the Political Resolution, there was no direct mention about toppling the Indira Government at the Centre—the position taken by Sri Limaye—but there was stress that the SSP would establish a government “after bringing down the present government at the Centre.”

Declaring that the SSP wanted to oust the Indira Government with the cooperation of all parties, it charged the CPI of raising false slogans, acting as “the saviour” of the Indira Government. It also charged the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra with trying to perpetuate the *status quo*.

In the original draft, there was outright support for Sri C.B. Gupta's Ministry in UP because of the abolition of land revenue on uneconomic holdings, but the compromise draft laid down that the SSP would support the Gupta Ministry only after reaching agreement on its entire time-bound economic programme.

As for participation in the Gupta Ministry, it was said, that would be possible only when other Ministries led by Sri Gupta's party (that is, the Gujarat and Mysore Governments) had followed Sri Gupta's lead with regard to the abolition of land revenue, and then too, the necessary action was to be by the directive of the SSP's National Committee.

Regarding Bihar, the original draft had put a blanket ban on any cooperation with the Indira Congress, but this ban was lifted in the final draft, which envisaged the formation of a government

by the SSP in Bihar taking the support of any party on the basis of a time-bound minimum programme.

It is significant to note that among the top leaders, it is Sri Madhu Limaye who indulged in unalloyed anti-Communism. It was he who declared that the SSP would seek support of all parties except those having “extra-territorial loyalty.” Guns were trained on the CPI for being “pro-Soviet and anti-national”, with a view to badger it into submission and dissociate it from support to the Indira Government in the face of the Syndicate offensive.

Significantly, the CPM was originally spared of this attack, but the West Bengal delegates kicked up a veritable row over this omission in the context of the deteriorated relations obtaining between the SSP and the CPM in West Bengal.

Another snag in the tactical line was with regard to the crisis facing the SSP unit in Kerala vis-a-vis the Achutha Menon Ministry. Chairman of Kerala SSP Parliamentary Board Sri Janardhanan's clear warning that the State Party might get wrecked if the leadership failed to reverse its decision to side with the CPM in its bid to defeat the Achutha Menon Ministry, may be regarded as a straw in the wind. Some were understood to equate the Convention decision on Bihar—to seek support of all parties to form an SSP Ministry—as being valid for Kerala as well.

Another significant point to note about the Sonapur deliberations was the SSP leadership's emphasis on socialist unity, an issue which, only ten months ago, had badly divided the party at the Jabalpur session where Sri Joshi's resolution on this score was defeated by the combined stand of Sri Raj Narain and Sri Madhu Limaye.

At Sonapur, all the leaders seemed to lay extra emphasis on the need for socialist unity. This is supposed to be in conformity with the new tactical line, as a lever to wean away the PSP, if possible, from taking an anti-Syndicate stand, which might help the Indira Government

in its confrontation with the Syndicate in Parliament.

The SSP leadership, which failed to implement the decisions of both the Gaya and the Jabalpur sessions regarding the building of a nation-wide mass movement on specific issues, has once again talked of a mass campaign on the basis of a Demands-Charter to be presented to the President and supported by a national demonstration in the Capital. It is however too early to say whether this decision takes the shape of a real fighting mass movement on specific issues, or, as earlier, it only forms part of a top political manoeuvre, this time its chief slogan being the ousting of Smt Indira Gandhi.

However, instead of cohesiveness, all this only brought the differences out in the open.

Sri Madhu Limaye, for instance, tried to trace the Congress split to the power of the SSP's "non-Congressism". Just the opposite was Sri S.M. Joshi's speech in which he said that it would be wrong to give all credit for the Congress split to the concept of non-Congressism.

Sri Karpoori Thakur, SSP Chairman, who is convalescing after the recent hunger-strike, sent a message which could mean different things to different people: "If we can take or extend support to one Congress faction on the basis of our concrete time-bound programme, on the basis of a similar programme we can take the support of the other Congress faction or extend support to it, if it accepts our programme and categorically announces the decision to implement our programme on a time-bound basis."

According to one interpretation, this means that Sri Thakur would like the SSP to simultaneously try to topple the Gupta Ministry in UP and the Indira Government at the Centre. Equally valid would be the interpretation that if the Gupta Ministry could be supported by the SSP on the basis of a time-bound programme, then it could also extend support to the Indira Government at the Centre on the basis of a time-bound programme.

There were moments of tension

in the Convention, demonstrating the wide gulf of difference in the attitudes, postures and principles put forward by different trends among the delegates; even when an ardent Lohiaite freely charged that the former PSPers (hitting at Sri S M Joshi) would have joined the Congress if the former Socialist Party had not offered them shelter, there was no pulling up by the Chair.

Partisanship flourished with extra-ordinary lack of inhibition among delegates who were supposed to belong to the same party. This aspect of the Convention deliberation was so overpowering that it was not surprising that the discussion hardly touched on the different items of the 17-Point Programme drawn up for an SSP-led government at the Centre, or of the 13-Point Programme for similar ministries at the State level.

With all the angry confrontations and contradictory political stand, how was it that the Sonepur Convention did not see the formal parting of the ways between the contending trends, particularly between the Madhu-Raj-Narain group and Sri S M Joshi's group? This is a question worth pondering over, particularly when we take into account the history of the Indian socialist movement which has gone through many permutations and combinations in the years since Independence.

It is on this count that both the strength and the weakness of the SSP comes out. The ideological content of Dr Lohia's "non-Congressism" was not only negative but was purely of a transitory nature. The socialism that the SSP preaches is not of any special brand: essentially, its programme of socialism differs little from what the other Left parties, including the Communists, want.

Non-Congressism by itself could not constitute an ideology; it was at best a tactical line for a very specific period of Indian development. With the split in the Congress itself, the validity has largely evaporated. But since the SSP ranks have been reared in the last few eventful years in nothing but this intoxication of non-Congressism, it can hardly be

expected to get over this addiction in one sweep.

That is why Sri Raj Narain could stay on inside a socialist party despite his close links with not only Sri C B Gupta but with business magnates as well. That is why Sri Madhu Limaye's anti-Indira bombasts are yet to be seen through by SSP ranks as a camouflage for an understanding with the Syndicate. Even in his polemics, Sri Limaye often uses Gappa vocabulary, and his performance in Parliament is no doubt a valuable asset for Dr Ram Subhag Singh. His concern for contamination from Communism is more insistent than that from communalism. But, his ploy could not yet be seen through by many earnest socialists inside the SSP because of the spell of non-Congressism.

At the same time, the Sonepur Convention witnessed a significant development. Sri S. M. Joshi and his band of selfless workers—most of whom have not mastered the art of publicity-seeking as have Sri Raj Narain or Sri Madhu Limaye—could get a hearing and could even influence the deliberations, though not to a decisive extent.

It was no mean achievement on their part to have been able to shake the confidence of a large section of the SSP ranks in the cult of non-Congressism. The fact that Sri Joshi's group could hold its own and could not be dislodged at all is a testimony to the new awakening which has been fast coming over the socialist cadres. The new realities of the Indian political developments could not but leave their mark on the Sonepur Convention.

It is this new element in the SSP politics which show that despite all the demagoguery and deceptive slogans of the SSP establishment, a break-through has been accomplished by Sri Joshi's crusaders who in the coming months will be able to establish enduring bridgeheads with like-minded forces, so that the Left can play a purposeful role in this crucial stage of Indian politics.

Observer

January 13

Korba : The Untold Story

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KORBA is deep in the tribal belt of Madhya Pradesh.

It is a coal mining region, but a complex of industries are coming up there based on coal. It is bound to become a significant industrial centre in the near future.

Korba is still an improvised township with about 10,000 people engaged in various industrial activities. Though the economic revolution is yet to come to the region, the social revolution is already perceptible.

Below Capacity

Korba has four coal mines, three of which were developed with the assistance of the Soviet Union, and the fourth mine was by the National Coal Development Corporation (NCDC). Of the three Soviet-aided mines, two are mechanised and the third is an open-cast quarry. The mechanised mines are among the best in the country. The total capacity of these mines is three million tonnes.

The Korba mines, like other mines in the country under the NCDC, are working below capacity due to fall in demand. In fact, the Surakachhar mine, a Soviet-aided mine with 1.1 million tonnes capacity, has not yet gone into full production for this reason. One mine has been closed down.

The Korba mines have been running in loss for some time, but in 1968-69 made a small profit of Rs 6.88 lakhs. It is hoped that with demands improving, production and profitability can be increased.

But the story of Korba is not an exception. In fact, the NCDC,

set up in 1956, has been having a bad time for a number of years now. It produces about 12.6 million tonnes at present from its 29 collieries, while the total production in the country is over 70 million tonnes. The private sector still dominates coal mining, like the sugar industry in UP, it is primitive, uneconomical in operation and exploits labour.

Of course, the politicians of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh have a stake in the private mines, just as the UP politicians thrive on the sugar industry. In fact, there is even a lobby for the coal industry in Parliament. Most of these private mines have not implemented the 1967 Coal Wage Board award, though their profits are said to be 100 per cent.

Dwindling Demand

The NCDC made a net profit of Rs 1.22 crores in 1968-69 on a total capital investment of Rs 102.89 crores on mines under operation. The NCDC has invested another Rs 57.04 crores on mines under construction, and Rs 10.39 crores on mines now closed down due to lack of demand. The NCDC cannot take pride for this poor performance. In fact, it adds to the grist of critics of the public sector.

However, there are many extenuating circumstances to this state of affairs. And they show that the public sector enterprises are more sinned against than sinning.

The first mistake was of our planners. They planned for a larger coal capacity on the basis of bogus figures furnished by

both the public and private sector industries. Even the Indian Railways are culprits in this, for they did not anticipate the electrification of the railway lines.

The railway demand for coal is expected to fall further from its current demand of 16 million tonnes to 13 million tonnes by 1973. The anticipated steel and power expansion did not materialise. The steel industry is a major user of high grade coal and its expansion has been stalled by a variety of reasons. Now it has been realised that there is going to be an acute shortage of steel soon if production is not expanded.

In the case of power generation, the case is still worse. While power generation has lagged as far as the whole country is concerned, there is a surplus of power in some States, for example, in Madhya Pradesh. In 1968-69 some 12.2 million tonnes of coal including 2.06 million tonnes of middlings were used by thermal power plants.

The present capacity of coal-based power plants is 5.5 million KW. By 1973-74 this is expected to go up to 10.93 million KW. It will raise coal demand to 28 million tonnes, including 6.60 million tonnes of middlings.

As a result of these delays in taking up projects, there was considerable surplus capacity and the NCDC had to close down 10 projects. The capital and maintenance charges of the closed and suspended mines constitute a very heavy burden on the finances of the Corporation and adversely affect its competitive position in the industry.

Uneconomical Mines

But the NCDC also carries the burden of running old and uneconomical mines, particularly those which were transferred to it by the railways. For example, the Giridih mines which are operating under a Presidential directive at present, has suffered a total loss of Rs 5.61 crores out of a total loss made by NCDC since its inception of Rs 6.65 crores. This is, in fact, a social cost which should be charged off

in some manner and not included in the NCDC accounts.

The Korba mines which produced 1.184 million tonnes of coal in 1967-68 with a loss of Rs 44.26 lakhs, made a profit of Rs 6.88 lakhs in 1968-69 with a production of 1.452 million tonnes. This was partly due to the closing down of one mine and the general improvement in production and sale. Yet this is poor result on a total investment of Rs 20 crores. Korba is using only half its capacity.

Unfortunately the NCDC coal is mostly inferior (the private parties were not interested in exploiting these mines) and, therefore, it suffers a permanent disadvantage in the matter of sale prices. In fact, while coal prices for higher grades were given a raise of Rs 1-2 from July 1968, there was no price revision for inferior coal. Since then the railways have allowed a further raise of Rs 0.75 per tonne to higher grade coal.

Price Discrimination

And in slack coal, which the NCDC produces a great deal, there is acute competition from the private collieries. As they are already making substantial profits on high grade coal, they can underquote in the case of slack coal.

In the meantime, the cost of coal has risen by a steep rise in power tariff and the coal wage award. While the rise in coal price has left the private parties with a further margin of profit, it has left the NCDC with a higher cost ratio. The average coal price in 1968-69 was Rs 32.87 per tonne.

But what does Korba get for its inferior coal? Only Rs 17 per tonne, plus Rs 4 by way of a cess. It is true that coal is sold by grades on the basis of calorific value. But Korba coal is still not getting the price due to it. And there is a long story and dispute to tell.

In fact, a retired Chief Justice has been adjudicating this case for the past two years between NCDC and the Madhya Pradesh Government, which is the main user of Korba coal (700,000 ton-

nes yearly) for the two thermal plants in Korba, one 200,000 KW station built with Soviet assistance and another, 90,000 KW, built by the State Electricity Board.

The Madhya Pradesh Government has a partnership with NCDC in two coal mines at Korba. The NCDC has been insisting that the State Government pay it Rs 26 per tonne even on the basis of calorific value. But a price rise has been denied.

Surprisingly, the MP Government pays as much as Rs 32 per tonne of coal to private parties for its other thermal stations, of course of a slightly higher calorific value. To this is to be added Rs 10-12 by way of railway freight, which does not arise in the case of Korba.

But there is no valid ground for this discrimination in the price. This is compounded by the fact that the MP Government is making almost 100 per cent profit on the power supplied from the thermal plants.

And here comes the politics of coal. There are some politicians in Madhya Pradesh who are interested in the Madhya Pradesh Government taking over these mines. Their strategy is simple: they know that the MP Government cannot run them and will eventually have to contract them out to private parties.

Election Funds

The private mine owners see in Korba today a gold mine, for they are good mechanised mines with excellent machinery. The main users of Korba coal are close by and the demand is expected to double in the next few years. And, of course, the price then will be revised to secure maximum advantage.

There is a moral here. We may talk of socialism and the dear public sector, but the politician can get money for his elections and other purposes only from the private parties. The NCDC cannot make a donation to election funds. Thus, the interest of the politician is to promote private enterprise. Have we a solution to this problem?

The continuing poor performance of the NCDC has ham-

strung it in the provision of amenities to its workers. How can it devote more money to the development of Korba township and for improving workers' amenities when it is making losses? And so an important function of these public sector enterprises—regional development is frustrated.

If everything is not well now with the Korba coal development, what about its future and what of other industries in the area?

The Korba coal development was undertaken to feed a few thermal plants, a fertilizer plant, an aluminium plant, and some chemical industries, all of which use inferior coal. The fertilizer plant did not materialise (it has now been approved) and the thermal plants are not using coal to the extent expected. Hence Korba works below capacity. It is supplying coal to the railways, to the two thermal plants at Bhilai and Rourkela.

The Soviet-aided thermal plant is working below capacity because the aluminium plant and other projects expected to come up in the region have not materialised. In fact, Madhya Pradesh has an installed capacity of 775,000 KW but the demand for power is only 350-360 thousand KW at present. This means that only half the capacity is utilised. UP and Maharashtra have ceased to take MP power.

This under-utilisation of capacity has in turn forced the MP Government to charge fantastic rates for power, while States like Rajasthan are giving power at concessional rates to big users.

Additional Problem

The aluminium plant at Korba, which is aided by the Soviet Union and Hungary, with one lakh tonne capacity, has not yet got off the ground. It is a Fourth Plan project, but the Fourth Plan is now three years late. The plant was to be a major user of power (65,000 KW) of the Korba thermal plant.

In the meantime the Hindustan Aluminium Corporation, the

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Destitution and Unemployment

RUDDAR DATT

EIGHTEEN years have passed since planning was undertaken in India. A stock-taking of the achievements and failures during the period has become necessary so that it becomes clear whether the path chosen by the planners, by way of priorities, was the correct one, or we should develop an alternative strategy to reach our destined goals.

The ends of planning were symbolised in some of the slogans the national leaders have been raising from time to time "Achievement of democratic socialism", "Establishment of a socialist pattern of society", "Creation of full employment", "Reduction of inequalities of income and wealth" and "Provision of adequate opportunities for all irrespective of caste, creed, religion or colour".

Growing Discontentment

These slogans were the rallying point for the different classes of Indian polity to work for the plans. In the initial period, they provided the much-needed motive force in the form of people's participation for the planned development of the country. But our failure to give content to the slogans disillusioned the masses and they began to lose faith in planning. The expression to this feeling of growing discontentment was visible seen in the 1967 elections when the Congress was voted out of power in several States of India.

Even if one ignores for the time being the objective of eradicating poverty and reduction of inequalities of income, the relevant question is: Have we succeeded

ed in removing destitution? Have we solved the problem of unemployment and under-employment that plagues the Indian society?

There is no doubt that national income and per capita income have gone up during the 18-year period of planning, but it is

equally true that no dent has been made on the problem of destitution, either in the rural or in the urban areas. The question of removing poverty remains a distant dream. Figures in table I reveal that 34.6 per cent of the population of India is living below the poverty line. Out of these, 22.4 per cent are in the ring of destitution and 13.2 per cent suffer severe destitution.

Another meaningful slogan for the masses is the achievement of the target of full employment. Employment is a powerful instrument for correcting inequalities of distribution. But it is a matter of great regret and serious concern that in each successive plan, the backlog of unemployment has been on the increase. Table II brings out deteriorating employment situation.

Table I

THREE RINGS OF POVERTY IN INDIA

Poverty level	Total number (in millions)	Percentage of total population
Severe destitution	61.7	13.2
Destitution	104.4	22.4
(i) Rural	81.8	21.4
(ii) Urban	22.6	26.7
Poverty	161.6	34.6

NOTE: Based on per capita monthly expenditure—Rural areas: Severe destitution Rs 0—11, Destitution Rs 0—13, and Poverty Rs 0—15, Urban areas: Severe destitution Rs 0—15, Destitution Rs 0—18, and Poverty Rs 0—24

Table II

UNEMPLOYMENT DURING THE PLANS

(in lakhs)			
	Backlog unemployment at the beginning of the Plan	During the Plan Period	
		New entrants to the labour force	Additional jobs created
First Plan	33	95	75
Second Plan	53	113	93
Third Plan	71	170	145
Three Annual Plans	96	138	4—14
Fourth Plan	220—230	—	—

Table III
FINANCING THE FIVE YEAR PLANS

(in Rs crores)

	Second Plan		Third Plan		Three Annual Plans	
	Actual	Per cent	Actual	Per cent	Actual	Per cent
1 Total domestic saving	2562	55.7	5021	58.5	2990	44.2
a) Surplus from current revenues	-50	-1.1	-419	-4.9	218	3.2
b) Surplus from railways	150	3.3	62	0.7	-132	-2.0
c) Surplus from public enterprises	—	—	373	4.4	461	6.8
d) Additional Taxation	1052	22.8	2892	33.7	907	13.4
e) Internal private saving	1410	30.7	2113	24.6	1536	22.7
2 External Assistance	1090	23.7	2423	28.2	2767	40.9
3 Deficit Financing	948	20.6	1133	13.2	1006	14.9
TOTAL	4600	100.0	8577	100.0	6763	100.0

SOURCE *The Five Year Plans*

Table II (See p. 9) makes the employment situation abundantly clear. While at the beginning of the Third Plan, 71 lakh persons were unemployed, there were 96 lakh unemployed persons in 1966. The conditions of drought and the recession further unbalanced the already deteriorating situation.

During the period of the annual plans (1966-67 and 1968-69), there was only a marginal increase of employment. Consequently, the number of unemployed suddenly shot up to 220-230 lakh persons. It must also be remembered that 16 million persons were recorded as under-employed in the rural areas during the Third Plan. It is, therefore, an inescapable conclusion that there is heavy under-utilization of labour in the Indian economy.

A survey of the planning period brings forth the hard fact that the gap between targets and achievements under the plans instead of narrowing down, has increased with the progress of planning. This increasing gap is a serious problem which, if not bridged, will completely erode the faith of the people in planning.

For instance, during the Second Plan, it was decided to mobilise resources by additional taxation to the extent of Rs 450 crores (9.4 per cent of the total plan outlay), but additional taxation to the tune of Rs 1,052 crores (22.8 per cent of the total

plan outlay) was actually carried out. Similarly, in the Third Plan additional taxation to the extent of Rs 1,710 was planned, but actual additional taxation touched a figure of Rs 2,892 crores, that is 33.8 per cent of the total Plan expenditure, as against 22.8 per cent as targeted.

Real resources of financing the plans are provided by public and private savings. The second component of plan-financing is provided by external assistance and deficit financing. To increase domestic savings, the surplus from current budgetary revenues has to be stepped up, the public sector enterprises have to yield surplus and additional taxation has to be used to mobilise the funds needed.

Decreasing Savings

All these measures are complementary, but whereas during the Second Plan, domestic savings provided 56 per cent of the total plan-outlay, in the Third Plan it provided 58.5 per cent, and during the three annual plans, domestic savings yielded barely 44.2 per cent of the total plan outlay. As against this foreign assistance which was 23.7 per cent of total outlay during the Third Plan, jumped to 40.7 per cent during the period of the annual plans.

The decreasing component of domestic savings in the Plans indicates that a bold effort at

mobilising resources is not forthcoming and, in its place, the planners are adopting the apparently easy methods of financing. But may it be pointed out that external assistance and deficit financing may appear to be the paths of least resistance from the political and from the short period standpoint, but it would be a sin against the society to ignore their debilitating effects on the economy.

Whenever the quantum of real effort in resource mobilisation declines, there will be an increase in total money supply in the country and this will push up prices. The rise in prices will nullify the monetary increase in per capita income, and it is sound to upset all calculations of physical targets to be completed during the Plans.

The foregoing analysis brings to a few conclusions. During the early phase of planning, expenditure on infrastructures and heavy and basic industries was necessary so as to provide conditions for a take-off. As a result, the objectives of eliminating unemployment and destitution remained dormant.

Now that we have achieved progress in the creation of social overheads and heavy industry to a reasonable extent, it is vitally important that the highest priority be given to eliminating unemployment and destitution. The Fourth Plan has, therefore, to be suitably

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Correspondence Courses

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

INDIA is a country with a very low percentage of literacy and a much lower proportion of educated people. Many people, in spite of their eagerness to continue their studies after a certain stage, more particularly after school, are sometimes forced to discontinue their studies.

A number of factors, for instance, financial hardship, lack of time because they have to work for their living, absence of educational facilities in the neighbourhood, come in the way of fulfilling their ambition. The correspondence courses are meant to help primarily those who want to continue their studies but are unable to do so because of the above mentioned reasons.

Important Role

The system of imparting education through correspondence has a very important role to play in India where lack of educational facilities and poverty of the people are a great hindrance to continuing further studies. It helps adult education in a big way. The Kothari Commission has pinned much hope on this scheme. It has recommended that by 1980 about one-third of the total enrolments in the Indian universities should be in correspondence courses.

Delhi University is the first to start this scheme of education in the country. The popularity of the measure is evident from the fact that admission to the correspondence courses rose from 1,112 students in 1962 to 8,600 in 1969. Out of the total enrolment of nearly 50,000 undergraduate students in Delhi

University, 16,000 are enrolled in correspondence courses.

The importance of the correspondence courses has attracted a number of US foundations, which would like to have a hand in their running to serve their own ends. The prominent among them is the Ford Foundation. It is trying its best to get the School of Correspondence Courses and Continuing Studies separated from the University and converted into a separate autonomous institution with the status of a university, so that it can have direct dealings with the Foundation without any interference.

However, the School of Correspondence Courses has not lived up to its earlier promise. In the earlier years when the students were less in number, running of the scheme was relatively smooth. With the rapid expansion in admissions the whole system has been strained to the breaking point. Neither the previous Vice-Chancellors nor the heads of the School ever cared to look into the actual working of the scheme and no significant improvements were made in its running.

Unexplained Discrimination

The attempts of the School authorities have till been now to hide their own failings and suppress the voice of the teachers working there. For example, the School entered into a deal with some landlord of a nearby area to hire a building for housing a part of the School at a fantastically high rent. The deal was criticised by all, and a local weekly brought it to light along

with a number of other disquieting facts. A number of teachers were harassed for their alleged hand in this publication.

Once a member of the University Court deplored that the teachers of the School did not have even a common room or a staff room to sit together and discuss their problems and exchange their experiences. The then head remarked that there was no need for it since they all came, worked and went away!

For a long time most of the teachers were not confirmed in their posts. Their service conditions were not determined and settled hence they were afraid to point out the bungle and irregularities committed by the School authorities. They had to agitate to get the same service conditions which were available to other teachers of the University.

The then authorities were not happy at this because their power of arbitrary action was thus curtailed. Nobody knows why this institution was not treated at par with other departments and institutions of the University.

Working Groups

In almost all the countries, correspondence courses leading to a degree are conducted by the universities. To maintain academic standards, it is necessary that they should form a part of the university. Besides economy on account of certain administrative heads, they would benefit from the experiences of the institutions where regular teaching is done.

Hence, any attempt by foreign agencies or self-seekers to detach the Correspondence School, from the main University would, in the long run, be harmful from the point of view of both the students and the teachers.

Recently, the Vice-Chancellor appointed a number of working groups to study various problems of the University. A working group has been appointed to evaluate the progress of the correspondence courses and make recommendations. The unfortunate aspect of this group is that it does not have any representative of the teachers working there.

It is desirable to associate one or two teachers working in the Correspondence School with the group. Only the Principal is associated with the group who has not been in the Institution long enough to understand its manifold problems

The School has failed to cater to the needs of the students on all the six counts Preparation of lessons or detailed guides, editing of the lessons, correction of response sheets, radio talks, personal contact programmes, and preparation of supplementary reading materials

So far as the lessons and guides are concerned, they were prepared years ago, and no attempt has since been made to revise them or to include fresh material. They were prepared by persons who could find some patron to suggest their names so as to gain monetar of benefits.

It is widely known that the lessons abound in mistakes of facts and errors of language. It was strange that the teachers of the School with experience and understanding of their students, were not associated with the work.

The Radio talks too are distributed to the favourites. No machinery exists in the School to scrutinise and edit the talks. For mere eye-wash, some well-known names are also included, who have neither the time nor any contact with the students of BA standard at any level.

Lessons are not sent regularly to the students. In a few Departments, not more than three to four lessons were sent during the entire year. In no Department are all the prescribed lessons actually sent. Sometimes the prepared lessons go to the waste paper basket because of the lack of seriousness to get them despatched. The same is the fate of response sheets

A communique issued by the Working Group set up by the Correspondence Courses Teachers Association states that over the years the response sheets of the students have shown marked downward trend. Every student is expected to answer a total of 120 Students Response Sheets in one year or 30 SRS in each of the

four subjects he/she in has offered.

The students response has been continuously on the decline and it has come down to about eight per cent, from more than 50 per cent in 1962-63. There is no stipulation that students would have to answer a certain fixed number of response sheets to become eligible to sit in the university examinations. The result is that 92 per cent of students pay Rs 600 to the School of Correspondence Courses in three years just to get the facility of appearing at the Delhi University (Pass) Examinations as a private candidate.

When the lessons are few, the fewer are the response sheets. Whatever response sheets are received, they are not despatched in time. Sometimes they are not sent to all. The result is a high percentage of drop-outs and failures

Defective Administration

Though the School's finances increased with larger admissions, nobody has bothered to find out the reasons for this large percentage of drop-outs. In fact, of the 10,788 students eligible to appear in the BA examination so far only 2,781 have got through, that is, 25.8 per cent of the total enrolment. It is also noted that of the total number of students eligible to appear, only 51.6 per cent actually appeared, and nearly 50 per cent of these passed the examination. The drop outs in increasing numbers are to a great extent due to the defects in the working of the School

No educational institution makes any name by converting itself into a profit seeking organisation. The School authorities have not filled up the vacancies in the various Departments. Sometimes candidates are interviewed, but no appointments are made. The reports and speeches made by the authorities do not refer to these aspects but choose to highlight the few cases in which their students secured high positions. Nobody, can deny that the students of the School are more mature, more responsible and more serious

than the regular students. But their expectations are not fulfilled by the School.

If the University and the Vice-Chancellor are serious to make the scheme a success, thoroughgoing changes will have to be introduced in it. This institution should not be given over to the Americans, nor should it be used as a dumping ground for erstwhile and exhausted educationists.

Overhaul Necessary

Dr K. N. Raj, before becoming the Vice-chancellor, had suggested that the School should arrange suitable programmes during the summer vacations, or try in other ways to help students at selected points in their study and organise libraries at several centres. Besides, there should be a central library at the School from where the necessary books and typed copies of the articles from the journals could be lent to the students. No action has been taken in this regard.

It is desirable that the representatives of the teachers of the School should be consulted when a new course is to be introduced or changes to be made in the syllabi. They should be able to make recommendations on the basis of their experiences with their students.

The preparation of lessons or detailed guides should be entrusted to a committee having adequate representation from the School. This committee should allocate the work to different people, scrutinise and edit their work and keep itself in touch with the actual problems of the students. If possible there may be a permanent staff of lesson writers in the school.

Further, no distinction should be made in the award of degrees between the students of the School and the regular ones. The response sheets or essays of a student should be looked into by the same teacher in each subject throughout the year. They must be sent back after due correction, within a stipulated time. For this student-teacher ratio must be fixed.

The insufficiency of the

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Right of Dissolution

H.M. JAIN

ARTICLE 85(2) of the Indian Constitution provides that "The President may from time to time dissolve the House of the people" Article 74(1) lays down "There shall be a Council of Ministers with the Prime Minister at the head to aid and advise the President in the exercise of his functions"

It follows from this that the President may dissolve the House of the People only with the "aid and advice" of the Prime Minister and not otherwise But it is pointed out that the words "aid and advice" do not make it obligatory for the President to abide by the advice of the Prime Minister.

Embarrassing Position

Legally, this is true In fact, Article 74(2) stipulates that "the question whether any, and if so what, advice was tendered by Ministers to the President shall not be inquired into in any court". Why then advice of the Prime Minister should be binding upon the President?

The answer is that the Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to the House of the People (Lok Sabha) It can remain in office only if it is sustained by a majority in that house.

Now, if the President in any matter disregards the advice of the Prime Minister, the latter should resign. The President must now form an alternative government which would be an impossible task, since the majority of the Lok Sabha is presumably with the out-going Prime Minister

The new Prime Minister will find that he cannot continue in office for long and the President would be compelled to recall the former incumbent That will make the President's own position embarrassing and precarious

The question of dissolution of the Lok Sabha very well illustrates this political dilemma Suppose the Prime Minister advises dissolution of the House while the majority is with him The President refuses to abide by it The Prime Minister tenders his resignation The President offers the office to another There is no majority support for him in the House The result is that sooner or later the new Prime Minister is out-voted Now there is no other course left open to the President except to dissolve the Lok Sabha

In the ensuing elections the action of the President becomes a major political issue If the electors return the former Prime Minister with majority support, it amounts to electoral disapproval of the President's action.

Electoral Disapproval

The President will, therefore, accept the advice of the Prime Minister rather than risk his position and prestige It follows that dissolution will result automatically once the Prime Minister who has the majority support advises it.

It is possible to assume that the Prime Minister may have lost majority support through defection of his followers. He is thus reduced into a minority in the House. If he resigns and advises dissolution will the advice have the same force as when the Prime

Minister has the majority support?

The President may seek to form an alternative government, and he may succeed. Where there are only two parties in the house the loss of one is the gain of the other Defections from one may produce majority in favour of the other and its leader can now form the government But defections may also produce a separate party or group

Instead of two parties, there may be a number of them There may be a majority party and a number of small groups and factions The defections from the majority party while reducing it to a minority may not produce an alternative majority party There may thus result a number of small parties and groups none of them by itself in a position to command majority support In such a situation two or more parties and groups may form a united front (UF) or a samyukta vidhyak dal (SVD) and form a coalition government.

When, therefore, a Prime Minister is reduced to a position of minority through defections of his followers, is it not fair to expect that the other groups should be given the opportunity to form government, if they can? If, therefore, the President, instead of accepting the advice of the outgoing Prime Minister to dissolve the Lok Sabha, proceeds to explore the possibilities of forming an alternative government, is it not constitutionally right and proper? The arguments in favour of this proposition are, first, the electorate should not unnecessarily and frequently be exposed to the turmoil and expense of a general election and therefore a mid-term poll should be avoided as far as possible

Secondly, in a democracy all groups and parties should have equality of opportunity to share power No single party should have the monopoly of power for ever. The party in power should have no right to exclude other parties from office if their strength entitles them to it They should be given an opportunity to demonstrate their strength and worth. If a coalition of small

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parties and groups is able to show majority backing it should be given a chance to form government.

Thirdly, the automatic dissolution of Parliament may, in the hands of an authoritarian Prime Minister, be misused to his advantage. He may wield it to intimidate members into backing him. Nobody welcomes the prospect of an early election. The expenses, inconvenience and uncertainty of the result simply make it abhorring. The Prime Minister, by holding out the threat of an early election, may thus keep himself in power even though he is no longer acceptable to the majority party or the country at large.

Unbridled Authority

Finally, it is dangerous to leave the fate of Parliament in the hands of a single individual. It poses a threat to the stability of Parliament. The Prime Minister should not be left in a position to exercise it arbitrarily. No single individual should have unbridled authority in this matter.

For these reasons some politicians feel that the President should exercise his authority to dissolve Parliament only when Parliament agrees to such a proposal, and not automatically upon the advice of the Prime Minister.

These arguments are in fact misconceived. They mistake the nature and source of the Prime Minister's authority in a modern democracy. They put a premium on disloyalty and give a bait to floor-crossing. They mistake the will of the legislators as the will of the people.

They ignore the fact that a modern Prime Minister in a parliamentary system is virtually the direct choice of the People. The legislators have only one mandate: to support the leader. A legislator who fails to carry out this mandate is not true to his electors. It is a betrayal of the popular trust. It is a frustration of democracy.

A Prime Minister betrayed by his followers should have the right to appeal to the people. The possibility that the issue may

be carried to the people for decision will be a deterrent to defections. On the other hand, a belief that the President would not automatically grant dissolution would place a premium on disloyalty and would endanger the very fabric of parliamentary government.

The loss of parliamentary majority through defections make it necessary that people should be consulted immediately as to whether or not they support the government in office. Merely because some members of the party have crossed the floor after having been elected on its ticket does not mean that the party has lost the confidence of the country. The loss of its parliamentary majority through such means would clearly entitle it to go to the people again.

If the President refuses to grant dissolution to the Prime Minister who, bedevilled by the politics of defection, wants to consult the people, the President lays himself open to the charge that he is substituting his discretion for the judgement of the electorate. The consequences of this situation would be far reaching and are summarised here.

People's Verdict

First, the President would, thus, arrogate to himself a power and responsibility which ill goes with the theory and practice of parliamentary government.

Secondly, it would make the President an active agent in politics. It would give him infinite opportunity for manoeuvring and mischief. There would be complaints that his conduct was partial, unwise and arbitrary.

Thirdly, there would be no check upon discretionary use of this power by the President. Its exercise would depend upon his whim and caprice. He may concede the Prime Minister's advice in one case and turn it down in another.

Finally, once it is conceded that the President has the discretion in the matter of dissolution, it would be difficult not to concede that the President may dissolve the Parliament even on his own initiative, without the advice of the Prime Minister.

That would be a dangerous proposition.

Writing in the English context, Professor Laski asserts that the advice of the Prime Minister who recommends dissolution must be accepted at once. He argues "To grant a dissolution automatically is to place the responsibility for the government squarely upon the shoulders of the electorate, where, in the circumstances, it ought to lie."

Dangerous Proposition

In England it has now been settled beyond all doubts that a Prime Minister seeking dissolution will always have his way. In 1923, in 1951, and again in 1966, the Labour Government asked for dissolution when it was in office barely a year or so and it was readily granted.

In 1923 and again in 1951 responsible persons expressed opinions challenging the theory that once dissolution was asked for, the Sovereign was under an obligation to grant it. But on both the occasions practice repudiated such opinions, with the result that when dissolution was asked for by Prime Minister Harold Wilson in 1966, when he was in office barely two years, the event passed almost unnoticed.

In Australia since 1914, and in Canada since 1926, there has been no instance where the Governor-General refused to dissolve the House of Commons on being advised to do so by the Prime Minister. The refusal by Lord Byng, the Governor-General of Canada, to dissolve the House in 1926 on the advice of Mr McKenzie King, was widely criticised and Mr Meighen, who was installed in office after Mr King had resigned, was impelled to seek and granted dissolution.

At the next Imperial Conference, a statement was issued saying that the authority of the Governor-General in connection with dissolution was only such as the royal person enjoyed in the UK. The implication was clear that Lord Byng had exceeded his authority.

It is admitted that English conventions may not be quite

applicable to Indian conditions. There are obvious differences. In Britain, there is no written constitution such as the one we have. Britain has developed a two-party system while we are going in the direction of multiple party politics.

Britain has never had to face parliamentary defections on any appreciable scale. There have been floor-crossings in the House of Commons but they were never of a size which could topple a government. In India, on the other hand, defections have become the decisive factor in the rise and fall of governments.

In Britain, a defector is treated as an outcast by the major parties and defection may often mean the end of political career. In India, on the other hand, defection is quite often the public hero and public morality is not averse to it. In many States, defection has been attended with instant political reward.

But these differences only strengthen the argument that the dissolution should follow automatically the Prime Minister's advice. That is the only method of disciplining the legislators. This may help the growth of a healthy party system. At any rate, it would prevent the growth of splinter groups which would be no mean advantage to the development of the party system.

These arguments assume that the Prime Minister advising dissolution had the majority support in Parliament to start with, and was subsequently through defections reduced to a minority.

Two Alternatives

It is possible to assume that the General Election may not return any political party with absolute majority in the Lok Sabha. In such a situation two alternatives are possible. Either the leader of the largest single party (though in a minority in the House) anticipating or assured of the support of Independents and/or other like-minded parties may form a government, or several parties may join together to form a coalition government. In either case the government is likely to be weak, uncertain and

unstable and the Prime Minister sooner or later impelled to ask for dissolution.

It is suggested that such a Prime Minister has no right to advise dissolution. The President must explore all avenues of forming an alternative government before agreeing to dissolve the Lok Sabha.

Three Propositions

The reason is that in a House where no single party commands a majority of seats all the parties are in like position and it is but fair that they should be treated alike, everyone of them taking its turn (in order of its numerical strength) in the formation of government, either singly or in coalition with others. In other words, a Prime Minister of a minority or a coalition government has no moral right to deny to others what he claimed and was granted himself.

We, thus, arrive at three *laws* of dissolution.

One, a Prime Minister who has the majority support in the Lok Sabha, can advise dissolution and his advice is binding on the President.

Two, a Prime Minister who is reduced to a minority through defections should equally have the right to demand dissolution.

Three, a Prime Minister who heads but a minority or a coalition government, has no right to ask for dissolution without giving a fair chance to other parties and groups to form alternative government either single-handed or in coalition with others.

Until the opening of the winter session in 1969, the Indian Parliament had consistently been dominated by a single party, the Congress, with the result that the Government was invulnerable to any attack in Parliament. There was no possibility of an adverse vote succeeding against the Government in the Lok Sabha. There never was, therefore, any question of the Prime Minister asking for dissolution of Parliament before the end of its normal term.

Following the Indo-Pakistan war in August 1965, when the

Government seemed to be at the height of popular admiration, it was whispered in the party circles that the Prime Minister should go to the polls immediately and advise dissolution. The suggestion was never taken up seriously. Lalbahadur Shastri, the Prime Minister, himself died all of a sudden, and the matter was talked about no longer. The Elections were held when they were due, in 1967.

But the Congress this time was returned with but a slender majority in the Lok Sabha. In a house of 520, it had only 282 seats. However, none among the rest of the groups had even 52 seats, the minimum required to entitle it to the status of an Opposition party. With the Opposition, thus, badly divided, the Government was safe in the saddle.

This position altered with the split in the Congress party in November 1969. About 65 members of the Lok Sabha belonging to the Congress party sat as a separate group under a new leader when the House met for its winter session. The government was thus reduced, for the first time since Independence, to a minority in the Lok Sabha. The fate of the government became uncertain and it is being widely speculated that sooner or later Smt Indira Gandhi will ask for dissolution.¹

The question of pre-matter dissolution of Parliament has become a live issue in Indian politics for the first time. Two prominent leaders on the Opposition side, Dr Ram Subhag Singh and Sri H V. Kamath have separately met President Giri urging upon him that dissolution of

(Continued on page 36)

¹Refer to PSP memorandum to President Giri presented by the chairman of its Parliamentary Board, Sri H V. Kamath, on November 27 1969. It stated, "the Prime Minister may not like to depend indefinitely on the sufferance or conditional support of Opposition parties for her Government's existence. The Prime Minister may be sorely tempted to approach the President for dissolution of the Lok Sabha." *Hindustan Times*, November 29, 1969. Dr Ram Subhag Singh, leader of the CPP (O) also met the President for the same purpose.

Conspiracy Against Land Reforms

R. K. MISHRA

THE decision of the Conference of Chief Ministers, endorsed subsequently by the Bombay Session of the Congress, to implement the existing land reform laws within a year or so has again made the rich peasants and their political supporters active. Schemes to sabotage land reform measures have been revived and conspiracies are afoot to make the implementation of the existing laws meaningless. If these schemes succeeded, we would find that all the existing laws had been implemented in letter and violated in spirit.

A study of the strategy adopted by the rural vested interests and insincere politicians since the beginning of the First Plan, therefore, assumes great significance. Only by fully understanding the conspiracies which thwarted the implementation of land reform laws till now, will it be possible to forestall their sabotage in future.

Strategy of Sabotage

Rajasthan provides a classical example of such a study because 60 per cent of agricultural land in the Princely States, which were integrated to form Rajasthan, were assigned to intermediaries, individuals as well as institutions. Only about 40 per cent of land was held directly from the State by the tenants. A plethora of acts and rules were enacted and enforced with the avowed intention to abolish the intermediaries and improving the lot of tenant-cultivators. Unfortunately, these intentions have remained unrealised and a study of the development of land laws and their implementation indicates a progressive evaporation of the initial idealism. Consequently, it is difficult to claim with any certainty that the ratio of intermediaries, of course in a new form, has decreased in the State over the years.

A new class of rich peasants has not only replaced the old intermediaries and integrated a part of the latter in it, but has also acquired great political force both in the ruling party and in the Opposition, including the Left wing parties. One, therefore, finds in Rajasthan the paradox of both the ruling and the major Opposition parties claiming to fight for the landless, but in reality serving the interests of the rich peasants.

The law on ceilings provides the most scandalous tale of double-talk and double-dealing in land reforms. One of the Directive Principles of State policy laid down in the Constitution is that the State

should direct its policy towards ensuring that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good; and that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment.

In paragraph 12 of Chapter XII (Land Policy) of the First Five Year Plan, the Planning Commission suggested that in relation to land (as also in other sectors of the economy), individual property in excess of any norm that might be proposed should be justified in terms of public interest, and not merely on grounds of individual rights or claims and, therefore, favoured the principles that there should be an upper-limit to the amount of land that an individual might hold.

In pursuance of this suggestion, the Rajasthan Government decided by its order on November 19 1953, to appoint a committee under the chairmanship of the then Revenue Minister, Sri M.L. Sukhadia (and Chief Minister of the State for the last 15 years), for fixation of ceilings on holdings of agricultural lands in Rajasthan. The Ceilings Committee appointed two sub-committees one of which undertook an extensive tour of Rajasthan with the object of studying local conditions, gathering accurate data regarding soils, rainfalls, crop patterns, expenses of cultivation, and of gauging public opinion. Before the Ceilings Committee could submit its report, the Second Five Year Plan was published which proposed that during the Second Plan period "steps should be taken in each State to impose ceilings on agricultural holdings" (Chapter IX, para 37).

Opportunity for Landlords

The Ceilings Committee took about four years to submit its report to the Rajasthan Government. The report was submitted on September 15, 1957. It needs little commonsense to realise that this four-year period was enough for the big landlords to take steps to distribute and fragment their holdings in a manner as to escape the rigours of the ceilings.

In fact the rich peasantry was alerted of the likelihood of imposition of ceilings in Rajasthan as early as in 1952 when the Khudkasht Enquiry Committee (Khudkasht—self-cultivation) appointed by

the State Government recommended that legislation should be introduced for fixing a ceiling on existing landholdings. It also recommended that the ceilings should be applicable to Khudkasht of the Jagirdars also which were to be retained by them under the liberal provisions of the Jagir Resumption Act. *The Committee suggested that provisions of the Jagir Resumption Act, which allowed the Jagirdars to retain Khudkasht beyond the prescribed maxima, should be over-ridden. These recommendations of the Khudkasht Enquiry Committee were of far-reaching consequences. At that stage abolition of intermedia- rise and imposition of ceilings could be undertaken simultaneously with less cost and better result.**

But the feudal interests succeeded in their first attempt to sabotage the intention of imposing ceiling by accepting it in principle to soothe the popular mind and to deny it in practice by postponing its implementation till no surplus land was left for redistribution. That line is being constantly followed till today.

Recommendation Sabotaged

Any way, having succeeded in sabotaging the first recommendation made by the Khudkasht Enquiry Committee, the large landholders got a respite of four years and four months since the Ceilings Committee took this inordinately long time in submitting its 66 page report. The Report of the Ceilings Committee was discussed in the State Legislature in April 1958. The discussion was followed by the introduction of a Bill entitled Rajasthan Tenancy (VI Amendment) Bill, 1968, in October.

Meanwhile, many more steps to serve the landed interest had been taken. The recommendation of a sub-committee of the Ceilings Committee for an interim legislation to check transfer of land to defeat the ceilings was not accepted. The recommendations of the Committee about the maximum holdings for a tenant were liberalised.

The legislature referred the Bill to a Select Committee of the House. The Select Committee omitted the schedule of ceilings in various areas which was appended to the Ceilings Committee Report and also in the original Bill, and proposed instead that 30 standard acres should be the ceiling. This, according to a rough calculation, increased the ceiling limit by about one-third. This also was a clever manoeuvre to delay, subsequently, the implementation of the law because definition of "standard" acres in terms of actual area in various regions of different productivity had to be worked out *de novo*.

After a leisurely debate, the Ceilings Law was passed by the House and received the assent of the President on March 12, 1960, roughly about a year and a half after it was introduced in the House. The final legislation on ceilings included a provision not to recognise transfers of land in excess of the ceiling limit that had taken place after February 25, 1958.

*This was done in Ajmer, which was not part of Rajasthan at that time

This gave the big landholders a five-year period to do the mischief.

But the story does not end there. Though the Act was passed in 1960, the ceiling areas worked out by the Settlement Department and the draft rules—The Rajasthan Tenancy (Fixation of Ceiling land [Government]) Rules—were published on June 5, 1963, three years after the law was put on the statute book. Objections and suggestions to these rules were invited upto July 15, 1963. But rich peasants were still not prepared to let the implementation of Law begin. A discussion on the draft rules was agreed to and it took place in the State Assembly on September 10, 11 and 12, 1963.

The Government announced that the Law had been brought into force with effect from December 15, 1963, and the rules thereunder were effective from the same date persons holding 150 acres of land or above—five times the ceiling limit—were asked to file declarations.

This time-lag was a calculated attempt to afford the big landholders an opportunity to explore the possibilities of challenging the Law in the courts. Six hundred writ applications were filed in the Rajasthan High Court and two writs were filed in the Supreme Court challenging the law. The Constitutional amendment gave protection to these Laws and the Court dismissed these writ petitions on December 10, 1964. The Government waited for another three months and announced in the Rajasthan Assembly on March 22, 1965 that the ceiling Law would be enforced from April 1, 1965. It was not done.

The State Government again announced on August 6, 1965, that law would be effective from October 1, 1965. But now the time limit for filing returns was extended upto March 1966 on the plea of meeting the demand of military personnel serving on the Indo-Pakistan borders.

Jolt for Landlords

After the Indo-Pakistan war was over and normalcy returned, the rich peasant lobby again became active and found in the then Revenue Minister, Sri Kumbha Ram Arya, a stout defender of its interests. Sri Arya submitted to the State Cabinet a memorandum suggesting that the provisions of the ceiling laws need to be amended because large-scale transfers of land had taken place since the Law was enacted, and the purpose of reducing concentration and bringing about redistribution of land had indirectly been fulfilled. The landed vested interests also raised the scare that thousands of landless farmers and small peasants who had purchased land from big landlords would be threatened with displacement if the Ceilings Act, in its original form was enforced.

Unfortunately, for the rich peasants, just at this juncture when Sri Arya was trying to get through the Cabinet a proposal to amend the Ceilings Law and the Regulations thereunder, a political quarrel between him and the Chief Minister, Sri Sukhadia, ensued. Supporters of Sri Sukhadia lost no time in launching a vigorous attack on Sri Arya by

accusing him of being a supporter of the rich peasantry (Interestingly, three years earlier, when Sri Arya and Sri Sukhadia were engaged in another political bout, the former said that his differences with the latter arose because the Sukhadia Government had not implemented the law benefiting the landless.)

Sri Sukhadia's supporters also argued, and rightly so, that any change in the Ceilings Law might deprive it of the constitutional protection and make it vulnerable in a law court. The Sukhadia-Arya conflict ended in Sri Arya's exit from the Congress on the eve of the Fourth General Elections and with that the enthusiasm in the Chief Minister's camp for implementation of the Ceilings Law also ebbed.

During the precarious period following the General Elections, when the Congress Party was fighting to form its Government and subsequently to maintain and increase its thin majority in the Rajasthan Assembly, sections of progressive Congressmen insisted on an early implementation of the Ceilings Law. Announcements were made at least half a dozen times fixing the dates for the enforcement of Law. The latest announcement said that the Government in the first phase would take over land in excess of 90 standard acres. Even this was not done.

Now that it has become certain that the existing land reform laws would have to be implemented, rich peasant interests and their supporters have again raised the question of regularising illegal transfers of land made after the last date mentioned in the Law. The same old Kumbha-Ram-Arya argument has been revived that a large number of tenants who have purchased land during the last ten years, may have to be evicted if the law was implemented in the present form. State Revenue Minister Ram Kishore Vyas has told newsmen that transfers made up to May 31, 1968, would be regularised.

According to an expert in Ceilings Law, this is absolutely a false propaganda that implementation of the Ceilings Law would lead to ejection of landless. In cases where genuine landless persons have purchased land from big landholders after the stipulated date, the formality of acquisition and allotment can be done only on paper. The Government can resume land in excess of the ceiling limit and allot it to a landless farmer who is already cultivating that land.

Loopholes for Evasion

As an additional benefit to the landless, the difference between the amount of compensation and the price paid by the landless to the rich peasant can be returned to him by the Government. Otherwise, if even some categories of transfers are sought to be regularised, this will provide enough loophole to the bureaucracy and the rich peasants to get all their illegal acts regularised in the name of validating transfer of land to the landless.

A sample survey made in a study conducted under the auspicious of the Planning Commission, calculated that about 23 lakh acres of land may be available by the implementation of the ceilings law. But the Rajasthan Revenue laws Commission in its Third

Report has held the view that this assessment was a mere surmise. In the opinion of the Revenue Laws Commission, "The land which is going to be surrendered (on implementation of Ceilings Law) will be at the highest ten lakh acres, and this land mostly being in the north-western part of Rajasthan, will require much efforts to make it fit for cultivation".

But even this assumption of the Commission is based on one basic premise. The Commission has said, "it is of course implicit that the illegal transfers made during the period the law relating to ceiling remained unimplemented are not recognised". The Commission has also observed that "the general view is that there has been a good deal of illegal transfers. The authority charged with the function of implementing this law will no doubt come to know of such illegal transfers while implementing it and refuse to recognise illegal transfers".

The recommendation made by the Revenue Department of the Rajasthan Government that transfers made up to May 31, 1968, should be recognised and regularised, is of course a flagrant violation of the recommendation of the Revenue laws Commission headed by Sri D.M. Bhandari who recently retired as Chief Justice of the Rajasthan High Court.

Rich Peasant Lobby

The reluctance of the State Government can be easily understood. Numerous Ministers, a large number of Government officials and other influential persons have become peasant-proprietors during the last ten years. In many cases they have come into possession of agricultural land by transfers made by former Jagirdars and rich peasants. An honest implementation of the ceiling law may mean personal loss to them.

Secondly, within the ruling party the rich peasants, including the rich Jats of Ganganagar, the lawyers who are engaged by these rich peasants, the MLAs who depend on the support of landed vested interests, have become a powerful lobby and it would need more than skin-deep commitment to land reforms to give to the Government the courage to implement the Ceilings Law.

Since the beginning of the land reforms in Rajasthan the rich peasants have had an advantage. As I stated in the beginning of this article, 40 per cent of land in the State, even during the Princely days, was held directly by the tenants from the State. The other 60 per cent was held by the intermediaries. Many malpractices were no doubt prevalent. But land being in plenty, the intermediaries could not afford to create discontentment among the tenants. Even some of the Princely States enacted laws that were forward looking, namely the Jaipur Tenancy Act, 1945, and the Marwar Tenancy Act, 1949. The success of the Congress Government in the State in regard to the abolition of intermediaries, therefore, has to be evaluated in terms of the 60 per cent of the land.

The first crime against the agricultural labourers, real cultivators, and small farmers was committed in the form of Section 23 of the

Jagirdari Abolition Act This Section stipulated that any land which was recorded as a Khudkasht will be treated as land personally cultivated by the farmer intermediaries. This gave the feudal landlords a benefit to grab as much land as possible by manipulating settlement records. According to official figures, about 50 lakh acres of land were retained by the former Jagirdars as Khudkasht. This means that about 20 to 22 per cent of the cultivated areas was retained by them.

The Revenue Law Commission itself has observed that in some cases "a big Jagirdar was enabled to retain big chunks of land as Khudkasht though such land was neither cultivated by him or any member of his family, nor was such a big area necessary for his rehabilitation". It is obvious that a large number of real cultivators must have been ejected from these lands or made dependable on the mercy of the Jagirdars who were legally made owners of Khudkasht lands. It is no surprise, therefore, that the Commission should have come to the conclusion that the Jagirdars found "that they are better placed in life than they were before".

The softness towards the richest section of land holders is also reflected in the attitude towards the huge areas of land held by the former rulers. The Jagirdari Abolition Acts, did not affect the villages and lands included in the inventories of the private property of the rulers and the covenanting States. It was only in 1963 that the Rajasthan Land Reforms and Acquisition of Land Owners Estates Act was passed by the State legislature. It received the assent of the President on April 6, 1964. The rules to give effect to the provision of this Act were published on June 30, 1964.

The former Princes, however, went to the High Court. The Government took the matter lightly as is evident from the fact that the dispute remained pending in the High Court for five years. Only recently the High Court has struck down some sections of this law. The Government reportedly declared its intention to promulgate an ordinance to cover the lacuna indicated by the High Court. But the time lag available between the Court's decision and the formalities of taking necessary corrective steps have, according to reliable sources, given enough time to the former rulers to take steps to escape from any future legal onslaughts.

The High Court had only stayed the disturbance of the possession of former rulers on the land covered by this law. The State Government, however, was entitled to collect land revenue from them. Enquiries made from official sources revealed that the Government had no information whether the district officials were actually collecting land revenue from the former rulers.

According to the minute of dissent appended by Sri Ramanand Agarwal, MLA to the report of the Revenue Law Commission, "the tenants of Khudkasht who could acquire the *khatedar* rights only covered 38 per cent of the land and from the rest they were either evicted or could not get *khatedar* rights in spite of provisions made in law".

The attitude of the revenue administration towards the poor farmers is also indicated by another

illustration. During the last few years, the State Government has allotted about 40 lakh acres of land. The point whether all this land has been allotted to genuine landless or to the new land hungry class of resourceful persons, is a matter of detailed enquiry. But it is surprising that the rules for the allotment of land by the cooperative institutions, including the Land Mortgage Bank, excluded the *ghau-khatedar* tenants from getting loan. Most of the new allottees are *ghaur-khatedar* tenants and for years they have been starved of any credit facilities which were appropriated by the rich peasants.

Concealed Absentee Landlordism

Sub-tenancy prevails on a large scale in the State and not-so-concealed absentee land-lordism is prevalent on a large scale. *According to a sample survey, on an average every tenth cultivator in Rajasthan may be expected to be a sub-tenant and of the sub-tenants roughly two-thirds are likely to be share cropper.* This, of course, does not include those who are formally designated as employees of the tenants-in-chief but in reality are share croppers. In fact, there has been a marked increase in the number as well as acreage under sub-tenancy during the post-land-reform period.

The contempt with which the voluminous reports of the Rajasthan Revenue Laws Commission have been treated is an eloquent testimony to the power of the rich peasantry in blocking the measures intended to plug loopholes in the land reforms laws and their implementation. The first report of the Revenue Laws Commission was submitted on January 17, 1964. The Commission also submitted drafts of an integrated tenancy bill, the Rajasthan Land Management and Development Bill, the Rajasthan Acquisition Bill, and made some useful suggestions, which after thorough public debate, could go a long way in completing the process of implementation of land reforms.

But the Report, it appears, has been consigned to some dark corner of the bureaucratic jungle and some of its suggestions are sought to be implemented in mutilated form because only thus the rich peasantry and its political cohorts can successfully execute their overt and covert designs to consolidate and increase their economic power in the country-side.

Beef In Ancient India

by

RAJA RAJENDRALALA MITRA

Being a reprint of Chapter VI of the author's book *Indo-Aryans* Vol I, published originally in 1881

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The first part of this article giving the Soviet view on the political stand of M.N. Roy, was published in the MAINSTREAM of January 10, 1970, in view of the widespread interest in the subject among the Left-wing circles in India. The author is a Soviet intellectual specialising in political developments in Asia. The concluding part of the article is given below.

Lenin's Fight Against Sectarianism in National-Colonial Movement-II

A. REZNICOV

OTHER changes were also made. The original text of the "Supplementary Theses" read. "The source from which European capitalism draws its main strength is no longer in the industrial European countries but in the colonial possessions and dependent countries," while the final text said. "One of the principal sources from which European capitalism draws its main strength are the colonial possessions and dependent countries."

A study of the commission materials leaves no doubt that these changes also were made in keeping with Lenin's advice.

In his statement Roy claimed that by its exploitation of the colonies' imperialism was provided with an opportunity to make the proletariat in the West, all the proletariat, and not just the privileged few among the workers, its ally. The allegation that the European capitalists backed by their colonial resources could give "all surplus value" to the workers of the metropolitan countries was untenable and harmful, since it counterposed proletarians and all working people in the East to their ally, the working class of the capitalist West. From an utterly false premise Roy drew the conclusion that the fate of world communism depended exclusively on the triumph of socialism in the East. Lenin took an entirely different approach to this question. He attached immense importance to unity between proletarians of all countries and oppressed nations; he regarded joint action and a united front of these forces as an absolutely essential condition for victory over imperialism, he brought to the fore the task of rallying the movements of advanced workers in all lands and all national-liberation movements around the only country at that time to have a dictatorship of the proletariat. Roy, Lenin said, had gone "too far" in his estimation of the revolutionary movement in Eastern countries. Without belittling the importance of the revolutionary movement in the East, Lenin's very keen evaluation pointed to the fallacy and impermissibility of presenting it as the only force in the struggle against imperialism.

Lenin firmly defended the principle of proletarian internationalism, stressing that the proletariat of the advanced countries and the oppressed peoples in the colonies must actively participate in the united anti-imperialist front, that both these forces were grouped around the country where the proletariat had triumphed.

He wrote "the socialist revolution will not be solely, or chiefly, a struggle of the revolutionary proletarians in each country against their bourgeoisie —no, it will be a struggle of all the imperialist-oppressed colonies and countries, of all dependent countries against international imperialism. Characterizing the approach of the world social revolution in the Party Programme we adopted last March, we said that the civil war of the working people against the imperialists and exploiters in all the advanced countries is beginning to be combined with national wars against international imperialism." If we compare this statement with the appraisal Lenin made in his speech at the commission of the 2nd Congress we see that he did not regard the struggle against imperialism as mostly "Western" or mostly "Eastern." He viewed it as one world revolutionary process with the working class as its vanguard.

Lenin was the first to indicate the significance of the awakening of the oppressed and exploited masses of the East and the "Eastern route" opening before the world revolution. He was also the first to see the danger of proclaiming this route to be the only one. "For every truth," he wrote a few months before the 2nd Congress of the Comintern, "if 'overdone' (as Dietzgen senior put it), if exaggerated, if carried beyond the limits of its actual applicability, can be reduced to absurdity, and is even bound to become an absurdity under these conditions."

That part of Roy's statement which declared that the "Eastern route" of world revolution was the only correct one, came from the same source —the persisting petty-bourgeois, voluntarist notion of the character and course of the revolutionary

process, which led the leftist trends opposing Lenin's thesis of rallying all anti-imperialist forces in the oppressed countries. Very important here was a lack of confidence in the possibilities of the proletariat of the oppressor nations, which, in Roy's view, moved towards complete freedom from exploitation not through revolutionary struggle with "their own" capitalists but by becoming almost their ally in colonial plunder. And this was said at a time when the revolutionary proletarians of the European countries were storming the citadels of capitalism.

Roy's thesis that the "Eastern route" of revolution was, in effect, the only one, naturally could not be, nor was it supported by the Congress. History has shown how right Lenin was in drawing serious attention to Roy's mistake. The acceptance of Roy's line would have caused immense harm to the world communist movement. His concepts could hardly conceal a system of views and actions basically alien to Marxism-Leninism.

Communist Movement in the East

The tasks of the Communist Parties of the colonial and dependent countries at the initial stage of the communist movement in the East were set forth by Lenin in his address to the 2nd All-Russia Congress of Communist Organizations of the Peoples of the East on November 22, 1919. He said: "relying upon the general theory and practice of communism, you must adapt yourselves to specific conditions, such as do not exist in the European countries; you must be able to apply that theory and practice to conditions in which the bulk of the population are peasants, and in which the task is to wage a struggle against medieval survivals and not against capitalism. That is a difficult and specific task, but a very rewarding one, because masses that have, hitherto, taken no part in the struggle are being drawn into it, and also because the organization of communist cells in the East gives you an opportunity to maintain the closest contact with the Third International. You must find specific forms for this alliance of the foremost proletarians of the world with the labouring and exploited masses of the East whose conditions are in many cases medieval." Thus Lenin saw the establishment of close mutual links between the revolutionary movement in the East and the progressive proletarians of the world as a major task of Communists.

Roy and other "Leftist" claimed that "organized socialist or communist parties already existed in most Eastern countries" and their task in all cases was immediate struggle for socialist revolution. They categorically rejected any idea on the Comintern giving aid to the national-liberation movement and denied the very existence of the anti-imperialist aspect of nationalism. In fact they advocated that the communist movement should be divorced from the broad toiling masses in the backward countries to whom the awakening of national consciousness was the first step in active participation in political life. Roy asserted that the masses had turned away from the nationalists and demanded that the Comintern assist exclusively in

the establishment and development of a communist movement which, according to him, should keep out of the national-liberation struggle.

Lenin attached primary importance to forming and consolidating organizationally and politically a proletarian vanguard in the oppressed countries, believing that if the budding Communist Parties in the East used correct tactics, broad prospects were open to them to win over the masses and take leading positions in the liberation movement. At the same time he warned the Communists of the East against artificially accelerating the formation of mass Communist Parties at an early stage of the proletarian movement.

It was at one time believed that in 1920 the Comintern held a different view since the final published text of the seventh supplementary thesis stated that "the primary and most necessary task is to set up Communist parties that will organize the peasants and workers and lead them to revolution and the establishment of Soviet republics."

It followed from this thesis, as published in 1934, that the Communist parties in the oppressed countries found themselves, from their very inception, in a situation where conditions had so matured that they could act as the sole leader of the mass revolutionary movement on a national scale. Yet these views were opposed by Lenin and were excluded from the original text of Roy's theses.

But this is not all. The above quotation from the seventh supplementary thesis is followed by this conclusion: "Thus the masses in the backward countries will be able to attain communism not through capitalist development but under the guidance of the class-conscious proletariat of the advanced capitalist countries." In point of fact the word "thus" is meaningless in this context. If, as was asserted above, the primary task of the Communists in the East at that stage was to set up Communist parties capable of reading a victorious revolution in their countries, then it is poor logic to conclude that the masses in the backward countries would come to communism under the leadership of the proletarians of the advanced capitalist countries.

All that remains to be added is that the proletarian parties in the colonies are dealt with in the next (eighth) thesis. The initial text of this thesis reads: "In most colonies there already exist organized socialist or Communist parties which have close relations with the mass movement," while the text approved by the Congress mentioned "organized revolutionary parties seeking to establish close links with the working masses." The thesis stated that the Western Communist parties should help the revolutionary movement in the colonies through proletarian parties.

These glaring contradictions obviously required clarification, all the more so since many well-known pronouncements of Lenin testify that he saw the primary and most necessary task of Communists to be their work in mass organizations of working people.

In his report at the plenary sitting of the Congress of July 26, 1920 Lenin substantiated the possibility of backward countries' transition to socialism by-

passing the capitalist stage, among the major conditions of this transition, along with assistance on the part of the victorious proletariat, he named the need to arouse in the masses a striving to undertake independent political activity and organization. He stressed in this connection that "it is the bounden duty of Communist parties, and of the elements that are prepared to found Communist parties, to conduct propaganda in favour of peasants' Soviets everywhere, backward countries and colonies included. Wherever conditions permit, they must make immediate attempts to set up Soviets of the working people." Lenin pointed out once again in the same report that the Communist parties should immediately, and in all parts of the world, begin work in this direction. Thus the question of non-capitalist way of development mentioned in the seventh supplementary thesis was, in Lenin's view, most closely linked with the setting up of mass political organizations of working people, the "Soviets of the exploited." It could naturally be assumed that a mistake was made in the 1934 publication of the document in that section of the seventh supplementary thesis which dealt with the immediate founding of Communist parties. Moreover one would expect the thesis, as adopted by the Congress, to mention the political organizations of the working people of the East through which Communists would exert influence on the masses.

A study of the Congress materials, in particular the English text of the resolutions on the national and colonial questions which were used in 1934 by the compilers of the "Minutes of the Communist International Congresses. Second Comintern Congress" confirms the assumption that a mistake was made in the translation of the seventh supplementary thesis. The text from which the translation was made actually said that "the basic and most necessary task is the formation of a non-party organization of peasants and workers."¹

Comparison of the seventh supplementary thesis in its true wording with the cardinal points made by Lenin in his report at the plenary session of July 26 reveals their complete identity. Lenin and the Comintern as a whole then considered the basic and most necessary task of Communists in their work with the masses in the oppressed countries to be the formation of mass national-revolutionary organizations of working people, "non-party organizations" which would be a way of implementing the "ideas of Soviet organization" in pre-capitalist conditions. Lenin regarded this to be "the bounden duty" of Communist parties and elements prepared to found such parties and insisted that Communists should immediately embark upon its accomplishment.

Lenin objected to Roy's assertion in the commission on the need to reject union with the bourgeois-democratic forces in the colonies and his claim that the destiny of world communism depended exclusively on the triumph of communism in the East. He showed that Roy's views were quite un-

founded because, for one thing, the Indian Communists, up till that time, had not been able to form a Communist Party despite of the country's five million proletarians and 37 million landless peasants. This did not mean, however, that Lenin posed the task of immediately organizing a mass Communist Party in India (in point of fact, this was Roy's view). While emphasizing the exceptional importance of the formation and activity of a Communist party Lenin let it be understood clearly that the numerical growth of the proletariat and landless peasantry in a colony in itself does not furnish all the prerequisites for setting up a mass Communist party.

The attempts of certain Communists to proclaim the national-liberation movement in the colonial and dependent countries as doomed to disintegration and quick death, and their desire to "repaint" it a communist colour caused Lenin profound anxiety. In this he saw the danger of the communist elements being dissolved in the broad democratic liberation steam. Lenin categorically stated the need "under all circumstances" to "uphold the independence of the proletarian movement even if it is in its earliest embryonic form," not to merge with bourgeois democracy of the colonies. He specially hanged the original version of Roy's thesis where it said that "it does not necessarily follow from the bourgeois-democratic character of the tasks of the first stage of revolutions in the colonies "that the leadership of revolutions in colonies should be given to bourgeois democrats" to read "it does not at all follow." While advancing the idea of a united front Lenin at the same time considered the refusal of Communists to struggle for the leadership of revolution absolutely unacceptable in all cases, since this would turn them into an appendage of bourgeois democracy. But those who thought that Communists could win leadership without daily, painstaking struggle to win over the masses, that all popular movements in the colonial and dependent countries were in essence communist, those who paid lip service to establishing the hegemony of the proletariat, in effect, advocated the loss of the independent character of the proletarian movement. The sectarians imbued the proletarian movement with the ideology of petty-bourgeois nationalism whose danger and very existence they failed to see.

The principled and irreconcilable struggle Lenin waged against sectarian distortions on the national and colonial question was a struggle for the formation of real Communist parties in Eastern countries, for their independent class character, for correct tactics which suited the actual conditions and ensured close links with the masses.

"Towards Freedom—Or Fascism" by I.F. Stone, published in the *Mainstream* of January 10, 1970, was reproduced from the well-known American newsletter, *I.F. Stone's Weekly*, of December 29, 1969.

¹The corrected stenographic account of the Congress session in Russian mentioned the formation of "non-Communist parties."

Exploitation of Women

MARILYN GOLDBERG

THERE are many ways in which capitalism endeavours to keep the pressures on it from becoming too great. One of the most important is by creating divisions in the work force, in order to keep wages low and otherwise limit the power of labour. It does this by creating a labour hierarchy, through differences in working conditions and through perpetuating reinforcing ideology, so that skilled workers will feel superior to unskilled, white to black, and male to female. At the same time capitalism repeatedly tells all workers that they have ever before had it so good, that they are better off than workers (men, women) have ever been before.

The division of the labour force is of further importance to capitalism because it allows certain groups, namely, minorities and women, to be super-exploited, used as a marginal work force in order to smooth over cycles in the economy, and to perform vital but menial and poorly paid jobs. Ideology is very important in perpetuating these super-exploited groups, as it effects not only society's assumptions about them, but also their expectations about themselves.

Super-Exploitation of Women

Capitalism did not invent the nuclear family, or the concept that the role of women is to mind the home and the children. These institutions go back thousands of years, to the origins of private property, when man the hunter began to acquire land and desired heirs to pass it on to (see Engels). But capitalism actively promotes the isolated family unit and the women's role in it, through such propaganda devices as the glorification of motherhood, in order to facilitate its economic exploitation both of men and women.

Women are taught from the time they are children to play a serving role, to be docile and submissive, get what they want by being copy instead of aggressive. They are socialized to expect that they will spend their lives as housewives and mothers—for toys they are given the toys of their trade: dolls, tea sets, frilly dresses, and so on. They are never encouraged to think in terms of a career, unless it be one which is an extension of the serving,

subordinate role in the family, such as nursing or being a secretary. As they grow they learn that it is unfeminine and, therefore, abhorrent to be self-assertive or to compete with men.

Thus, most women mature with the understanding that their primary role is that of housewife and mother and that, while they may by chance work, their contribution will be merely supplementary and temporary, they will not have a career. This is true despite the fact that most women who work are essential to support themselves and their families. 70 per cent of women who worked in March 1964, supported themselves or others, or had husbands who earned less than \$5,000 in 1963. (*Fact Sheet on the Relative Position of Women and Men Workers in the Economy*, Women's Bureau, Department of Labor, US Government)

Capitalism's Marginal Labour Force

In a survey of women who graduated from college in 1957, while most were working or planned to work at some point in their lives, only 18 per cent planned to have a career (Oppenheimer, 231). Another survey taken in 1964, found much the same result, although of Negro women college graduates, 40 per cent planned a career (*Ibid*). Many women who do work feel guilt pangs about being outside the home (although most of them face their traditional household tasks unaided at the end of the work day). In a study of working wives in the Detroit area in 1956, nine out of ten often felt that a job makes personal relations in the home more difficult, hurts the husband's pride, or disrupts the home. (Wilensky, p. 234)

These attitudes which women have learned about themselves and their work make them a convenient, cheap marginal labour force for capitalism. Because they consider their economic contribution supplementary even when it is necessary to maintain a decent standard of living for their families, they are more willing than men to accept low pay and poor working conditions. Because they have been socialized to be docile and accept subordinate positions, they are far less likely than men to organize or create trouble for the employer. As they feel responsible to continue their role as housewives and mothers while working (and there are no facilities to relieve them of this burden), they are forced to accept a very low economic position and, even if skilled, to

This article is reproduced from the well-known US journal *Liberation* (October 1969). The author is a recent graduate of the Berkeley University, and is active in the San Francisco Women's Liberation movement.

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stenographers, typists and private household workers—involved with the exploitation of the nuclear family as an economic system, as are two-thirds of all health service workers.

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be exploited as a cheap labour force. They are bound to search for work near their homes, and very often for only part of the day or the year. Thus, they are in a poor bargaining position *vis-a-vis* their employers.

This situation is further exacerbated by the

Business offices in particular feel this need, as they have no product which can be stockpiled in case of waning demand. If they have over-hired, their employees simply go idle. This has been institutionalized in the flourishing temporary worker agencies—the Kelly Girl, and so on—allowing an employer to hire extra help by the week or the

DESTITUTION AND UNEMPLOYMENT

(Continued from page 12)

altered to gear itself to the new priorities

In the rural sector, land continues to be the principal means of employment. As against it, the enlargement of employment opportunities in the non-agricultural sector has not taken place. Similarly, employment has not grown in the urban areas to such an extent that would make it possible to absorb rural landless labourers. Consequently, unemployment is on the increase.

Professor B.N. Ganguli, in his inaugural address to the conference on "Challenge of Poverty" in Delhi on December 20, 1969, rightly stated, "Self-sufficiency in foodgrains production, which we are on the verge of attaining, has run against a basic problem how to feed those who are hungry, but do not eat because they have neither land nor work opportunities. Income and economic opportunities are today distributed amongst those who have land or are otherwise productively employed. He who does not own land or does not work, because he cannot get it, does not eat."

The solution to the problem of Indian poverty lies in evolving a socially just system of ownership of landholdings in India. Wherever, the limits of redistribution seem to have been reached, it is essential that tenancy legislation be strengthened so as to confer permanent rights of cultivation on the actual tillers of the soil.

On the other hand, there is an urgent need to switch over to labour-intensive industries in place of the capital-intensive ones. For this, a change in the investment-mix of the Fourth Plan is a

sine qua non.

Till now, the basis for the grant of economic subsidies has been the fulfilment of certain targets of output, it is the need of the hour to replace this norm with targets of employment. Those firms or enterprises which promise to create more employment should be given facilities of tax-credit or direct subsidy in the form of grants or import quotas.

Costly Assumption

Economic development, "green revolution", or heavy industry, has no meaning if the mass of the people cannot get a square meal a day. The slogan for the Plan should be "Square meal and square deal for the masses". To ignore social stability as the goal of planning and only to emphasize economic stability will prove to be a costly assumption for any government.

With regard to raising resources for the Plan, the principle of equal sacrifice by the various classes should be accepted. If as a rough measure, the incidence of direct and indirect taxes be used as a measure of sacrifice of the rich and the poorer classes, respectively, then it is obvious that the bulk of the finance provided by additional taxation comes from the pockets of the poorer section, of the Indian population.

Whereas the share of direct taxes as a proportion of national income has gone up from 2.4 per cent in 1950 to 3.2 per cent in 1966, the share of indirect taxes more than doubled itself from 4.2 per cent in 1950 to 10.3 per cent in 1966.

Although we talk of democratic socialism in India, we have one of the most regressive tax systems in the world. The ratio of direct and indirect taxes in India speaks of a very unfavourable balance in favour of the latter, whereas any progressive tax system should be based on Adam Smith's canon of equity, so very familiar to the economists.

The upshot of the entire argument is that those classes who have gamed in the course of planning should be forced to contribute to plan resources. Besides this external assistance and deficit financing should be kept to the minimum. From the long-term point of view, India can gain much more if it mobilises bulk of the financial resources out of domestic real effort.

In conclusion, it may be said that the future plans of India should give the top-most priority to the employment objective in preference to the output objective. For this purpose, in the non-agricultural sector, while allocating investment, it would be beneficial to adopt labour-intensive techniques which enlarge employment opportunities. In the agricultural sector, attention has to be focused on the redistribution of land ownership and also the provision of secure, tenancy rights.

For the purpose of providing finance, the principle of equal sacrifice by the different sections of the society should be adopted. To achieve this, there has to be identification of the beneficiaries of growth process during the last two decades, and tax policies shall have to be suitably oriented.

A bold and dynamic leadership alone can deliver democratic socialism because this requires a concerted attack on the citadels of vested interests.

Table IV
TAX REVENUE AS PERCENTAGE OF NATIONAL INCOME

Country	1950			1966		
	Direct taxes	Indirect taxes	Total	Direct taxes	Indirect taxes	Total
USA	13.2	3.4	16.6	15.3	8.9	24.2
Canada	9.0	7.0	16.0	10.5	8.6	19.1
UK	17.9	14.1	32.0	16.2	14.2	30.4
Australia	10.0	6.6	16.6	14.8	13.1	27.9
India	2.4	4.2	6.6	3.2	10.3	13.5

SOURCE: India, Pocket Book—Economic Information, 1968.

This discussion, following the article by prof. Hiren Mukerjee—"Stalin: A Plea for Revaluation"—in *Mainstream* of December 20, 1969, has evoked considerable interest among Marxist and Left-wing intellectuals. Two contributions in the discussion were published in the *Mainstream* of January 3, 1970, and two more are given below. The discussion will be resumed after the Republic Day Number of the *Mainstream*.

Myth and Reality

GAUTAM CHATTOPADHYAY

PROFESSOR Hiren Mukerjee has called for a Revaluation of Stalin (*Mainstream*, December 20, 1969). Hardly any historian will differ with him that the assessment of Stalin by the Soviet Communist Party's Twentieth Congress is quite inadequate and Marxists everywhere must go further and deeper.

We had, therefore, expected from Professor Mukerjee's pen a far deeper, more penetrating and objective analysis. It was a deep disappointment to find Professor Mukerjee's essay being a one-sided, bolstering-up of the Stalin myth.

For example, Professor Mukerjee opens the essay by saying "over an extraordinarily critical period of time, Stalin was the foremost revolutionary political leader of the working class and world Socialism." This was the Stalin myth in which Communists of our generation were brought up. But does it at all correspond with historical reality? Let us make a brief examination.

Stalin was the General Secretary of the CPSU from 1924 to the Second World War and also the *de facto* supreme leader of the Comintern from 1928 onwards. What were the main tasks of the period on a world scale? To resist Fascism effectively in Europe and to accelerate the pace of the colonial liberation struggles, on the lines laid down by Lenin in the Second and the

Fourth Congresses of the Communist International.

Let us take up the issues one by one. After the death of Lenin and till the time of Hitler's conquest of power, the leadership of the Communist International basically failed to pin-point Fascism as the enemy number one of World Revolution and, consequently, swung to and fro between an opportunist and a sectarian position, on the question of united front against Fascism. The man who was the theoretical father of such a dangerous deviation, was none else than Joseph Stalin.

As early as 1924, when the great leader of Italian Communism, Antonio Gramsci, was desperately advocating the forging of Socialist-Communist united front against Fascism, Stalin was giving air to his own views: "Objectively, Social Democracy is the moderate wing of Fascism. Those organisations do not contra dict but supplement one another. They are not antipodes but twins". Profound revolutionary thinking, indeed!

This suicidal formulation of Social Democracy and Fascism being twins, was to haunt the International Communist movement for over a decade, cripple initiatives for forging a united front against Fascism, and pave the blood-soaked road for Hitler's conquest of power in 1933.

Led by Stalin, the Comintern Executive's Twelfth Plenum, as late as in September 1932, was making

the serenely complacent formulation that "Germany will, of course, not go Fascist—our electoral victories are a guarantee of this". Thus, both the Social Democrats and the Communists continued to fight each other as the main enemies—and dug their own graves.

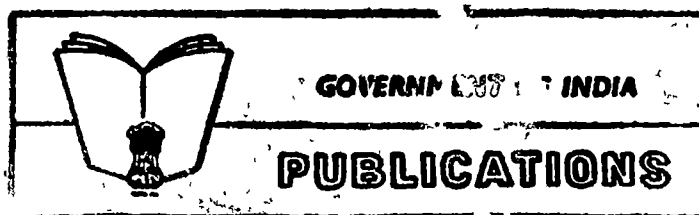
Even several months after Hitler's coming to power, the Stalin-led Comintern learnt no lesson. As late as in December 1933, the Comintern was still living in a fool's paradise.

In the Theses of the Thirteenth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, adopted in December 1933, it was blandly stated. "Communists must exert all strength to destroy the mass influence of Social Democracy. The stronger the influence of Social Democracy the greater the danger of Fascism. Communists must take a firm stand against those who seek to revise the theory that Social Democracy is the chief pillar of the bourgeoisie and want a reconciliation between Communism and Social Democracy on the ground that both are persecuted by Fascism" (*Documents of the Communist International*, Oxford University Press, Ed. Jane Degras).

Such was the pitifully sectarian anti-united-front line of the Comintern, led by Stalin, even one year after Hitler Terror had begun in Germany. Is this a sign of "revolutionary leadership"?

The present Soviet leaders have also admitted these serious blunders of the Stalinist leadership of the Comintern, though in mild accents. For example, "The Comintern's Social-fascism slogan—that Social Democracy presented the greatest danger and for this reason was singled out as the principal target—was wrong and, in effect, amounted to a theoretical justification of Sectarianism" (Ponomarev: *Peace, Freedom and Socialism*, No 2, 1969, p 7).

The situation was no better in mapping out the revolutionary strategy regarding the national liberation movement in the colonies. Lenin's brilliant line advocating broadest united national front against imperialism had been resisted from the



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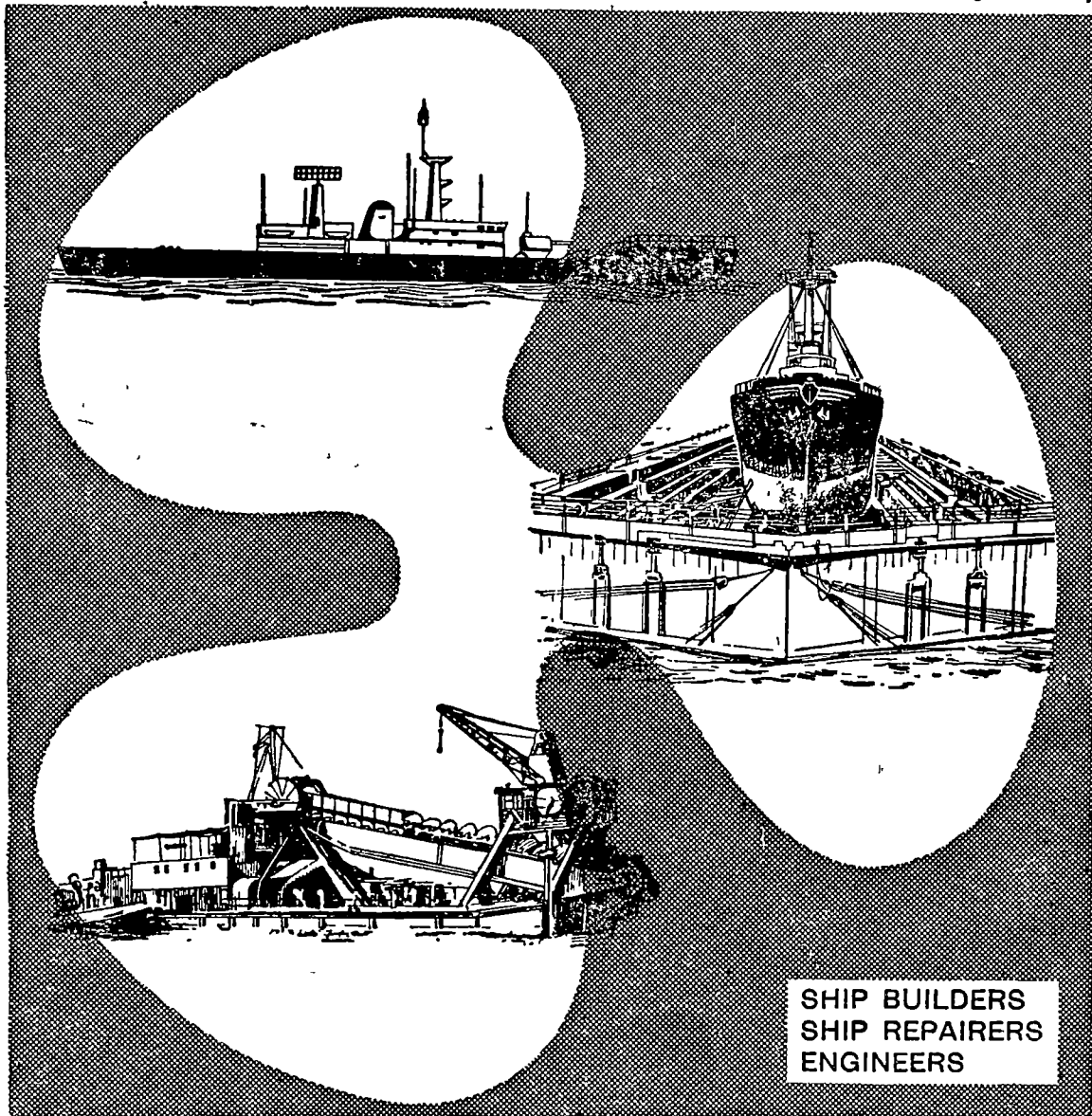
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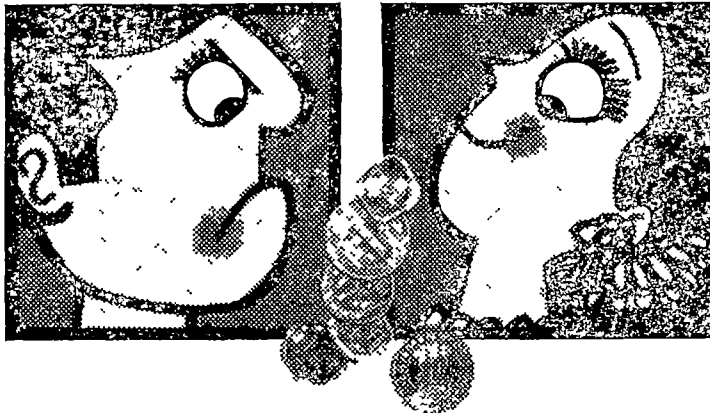
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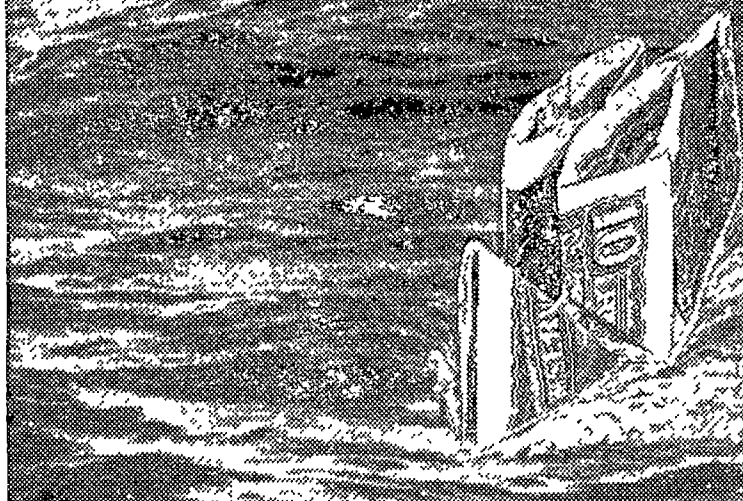


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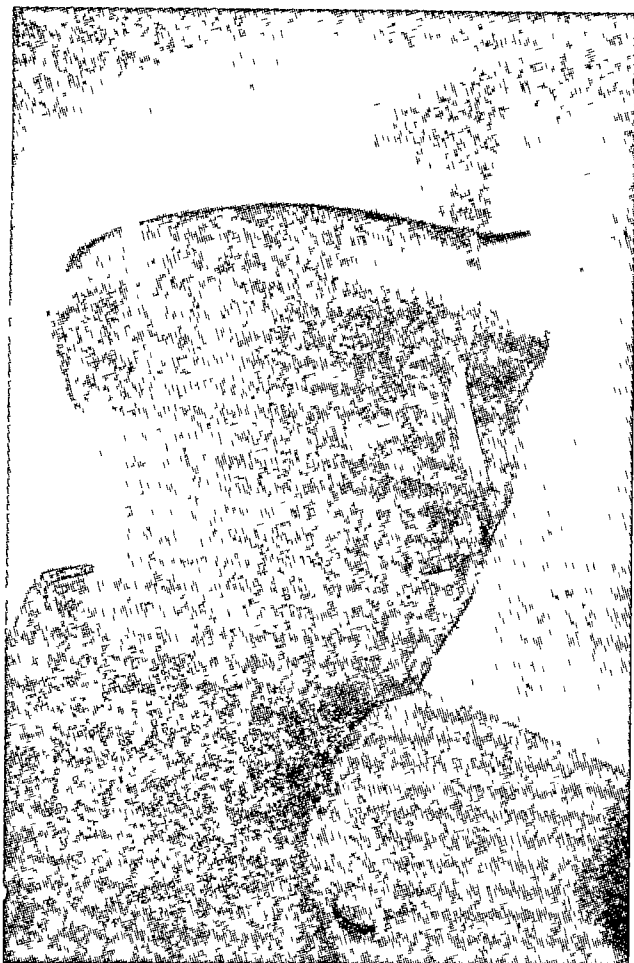
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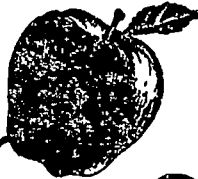
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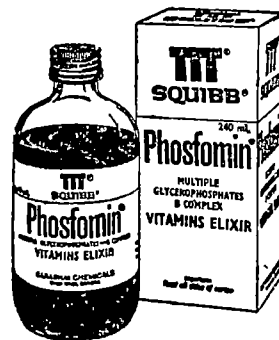
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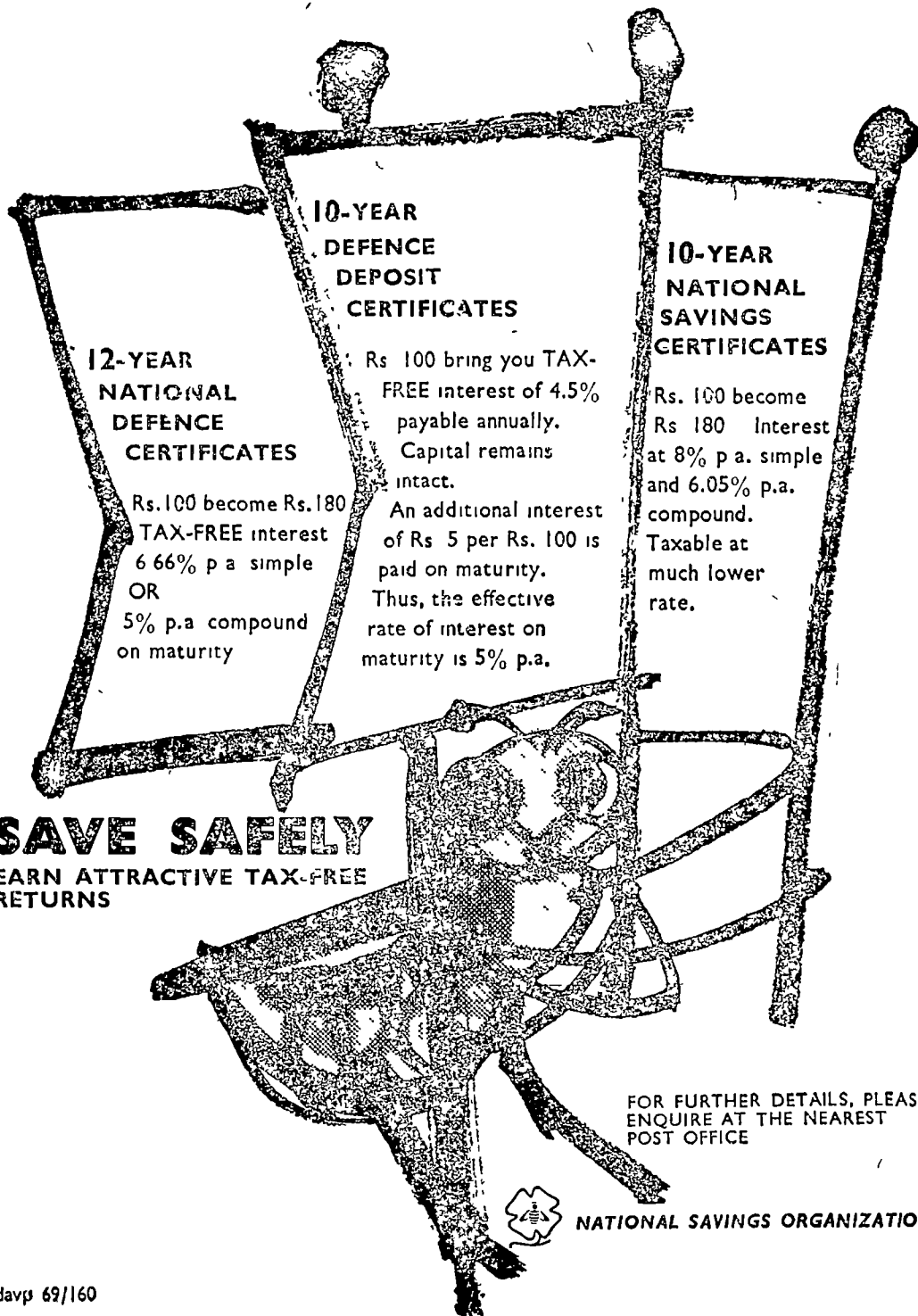


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Editorial

Against Blackmail

MINISTER of Petroleum and Chemicals, Dr Triguna Sen's ultimatum to the Western oil firms is one of the best pieces of news that has come from the Government for a very long time and deserves the unhesitating support of every patriotic Indian.

For two decades now, the three Western oil companies—the ESSO, the Burmah Shell and the Caltex—have been fleecing this country, taking advantage of the Refineries agreements that they could inveigle India into signing at a time when the country's immediate needs and also inexperience and bureaucratic leanings towards the West, combined to grant them unheard-of concessions.

Since then, this country has made rapid strides in developing her own oil industry, thanks to the ready assistance from the socialist world, particularly the Soviet Union. In the late fifties, it was the Soviet offer to sell crude oil in substantial quantity and at attractive prices with the additional advantage of payment in rupees, which enabled the Government to force a reduction in the prices of crude oil. The stubborn resistance of the Western oil companies could be broken for the first time mainly because of the assistance that India could count upon from the socialist world.

Last year, in June, the Government asked the three oil companies to accept a reduction in prices of imported crude from 1.38 dollars per barrel to 1.28 dollars. The Government has raised this demand, first, because there has been a striking fall in prices in the world oil market; secondly, with the growth of industrialisation, the country's oil requirements have grown beyond measure, so much so that the three oil companies had to be allowed to produce 7.75 million tonnes of petrol against the original licensed capacity of 4.575 million tonnes.

The enormity of the profiteering indulged in by these Western oil companies could be gauged from the figures available in the accredited organ of the City of London, the *Financial Times*, which in its issue of December 22 gave out that while the official posted price for Kuwait crude oil was 1.59 dollars, the actual realised price came down to 1.20 dollars, the Arabian light crude with a posted price of 1.80 dollars could realise only 1.26 dollars.

Against this, the three oil companies, after two months of negotiations, brought down the crude price by only four cents to 1.34 dollars per barrel.

Not only that. These three companies were found to be putting pressure on other foreign firms which were prepared to supply crude to India at a much reduced price.

It is in this background that has come Dr Triguna Sen's announcement cutting down the foreign exchange allocation for crude oil import by 20 per cent, together with the ultimatum that the Government reserved the right to take the next step if the companies refused to bring down the price of imported crude to 1.28 dollars per barrel. This is undoubtedly a major step in the Government's struggle to free the country from the grip of foreign private capital.

The challenge taken up by Dr Sen is no small one. The powerful oil lobby of the West is sure to raise a hue and cry over the Government's stand, and this is likely to be taken up by their fellow travellers in this country who include a whole tribe ranging from the Swatantra to the Syndicate. There is every likelihood of a diversionary campaign that the common man is going to be denied his kerosene.

The Government, however, claims to have made adequate preparations to meet any hold-out tactics by these three Companies. Help from friendly countries are known to be forthcoming. Apart from the socialist world, India has offers from the Arab countries; the UAR is prepared to sell her crude oil at 1.18 dollars, while Iraq has offered oil to India on barter basis. Incidentally, this provides one more strong point in defence of India's policy of friendship with the Arab world.

Against all such moves, the Government has to remain firm. This step, which makes up for the lag in the Bombay Congress Resolution on economic policy, making no mention of the struggle against foreign monopoly capital, can become the starting point of a nation-wide mobilisation against foreign vested interests in keeping with our people's anti-imperialist tradition. It is time that all forces of the Left come out in open support of the Government's stand and strengthen its hand in warding off the blackmail by the three Western oil cartels.

Challenge of Seventies

PRECISELY one week before the nation is due to celebrate the twentieth birthday of the Republic, three events have taken place on the very same day, which together underline the complexities of the Indian political reality today. On January 19, Smt Indira Gandhi dedicated India's first nuclear power station at Tarapur, built with US collaboration, the same day the veteran Communist leader, Sri EMS Namboodiripad, speaking before a Delhi University audience, condemned Smt Gandhi's Congress and Government for not curbing the domination of foreign monopoly capital, and the very same afternoon, Dr Triguna Sen announced the Government's ultimatum to the Western oil firms to bring down crude prices.

All these three incidents together bring out the complex totality of the India of today separately, each of these reflects the Indian reality only partially. Each tells the truth but the whole truth is told by all together.

THE evolution of Indian politics in the last twenty years has baffled many political prophets and many theories in fashion foundered on the rock of Indian experience. The Republic has been a veritable graveyard of many a dogma thrown up by both the Right and the Left. In its early days, for instance, many in the Left despaired, and others in the Right hoped, that this country would remain an appendage of the West, since its national leaders bargained for transfer of power with the

British. Later still, for years after Independence, both these schools of thought almost took it for granted that the American hegemony over India would be as inescapable as the night followed the day. Masani's prayers in this respect matched with Ranadive's forebodings.

Later still, in the black year of devaluation, in 1966, Asoka Mehta begged the Wall Street to take up back-seat driving of this country's destiny, while the Peking Radio could find nothing but Washington stooges running the affairs of this nation.

This long line of political pundits going continuously wrong, missed one single element in Indian politics, and that is the awakened consciousness of India's millions. The ingrained anti-imperialism of this nation has shown up false prophets and corrected political leaders, times without number.

In the fifties, it was the same unerring anti-imperialist instinct of the Indian people which found new friends and supporters in the world abroad. Nehru's foreign policy of non-alignment was primarily meant to defend the nation's interests against colonial powers, and that was why that non-alignment did not cease to be partisan in support of other peoples fighting imperialism. This way it found its natural allies in the countries of socialism that had asserted themselves breaking the world-girdling cordon of imperialist powers, as also in the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa. And such a foreign policy could be sustained abroad because of the sturdy anti-imperialism of the masses at home—the masses who gave it

strength despite the miasma of all brands of Western-invented political sophistry imported into this country by a whole host of people, from the Free-world democrats to equi-distant socialists.

The first decade of the Republic thus saw the translation of that tested anti-imperialism in the context of independent India. It expressed itself not only in the country's non-aligned foreign policy but in its determination to build an independent economy, untrammelled by the fetters of a colonial economy. The strategy of the Second Plan-Frame was the manifestation of this determination; and here, too, India's friend-in-need has been the socialist world, which forced the Western powers to loosen their purse-strings, apart from the massive aid it gave on its own in the key sectors of the nation's economy.

THE life of a nation, as that of an individual, can hardly be expected to be one smooth high-speed autobahn drive; it must have its ups and downs, its loops and bends. This could be seen in the hazards of Indian politics during the second decade of the Republic. The aggressive aberration of socialism in China led to India's armed confrontation with a power which had been taken as the friendliest of her neighbours; its hideous impact was seen not only in the discredit of Nehru and the disarray of the Left, particularly in the ranks of the Communists, but in the respectability it provided for the West, at least for the time being. Its portrait is to be

seen in the pages of Professor Galbraith's *Ambassador's Journal*, now on display in the bookshop windows of New Delhi

Perhaps the humiliation of the encounter with China, coupled with the departure of Nehru, gave wrong ideas to India's other neighbour, Pakistan, to try unsuccessfully to push her claims on Kashmir through a decision by arms. The expensive result of both these armed clashes could be seen not only in the temporary distortion in foreign policy but in the strains on the economy having to bear the enormous burden of a defence budget too heavy for a developing country

With all the confusion in the sphere of politics and economy, the mass mood also underwent a silent change. It was not merely the disappearance of the old veterans of the days of freedom's battle but the consequent slide-back on the economic front that unleashed a new wave of restlessness among the masses. Impatience with the status quo was manifest all over this vast country, an impatience which could be harnessed by a purposeful leadership at places, but at many other places it expressed itself almost in a populist exuberance. This could be seen in a shattering manner in the results of the 1967 General Elections, heralding the first irreparable breach in the Congress monopoly of power, and more spectacularly in the mini-General Election of 1969 in four States.

It is in this background of the awakened mass questionings that one has to examine not only the depreciation of the Congress votes at the hustings but the crack-up of the Congress monolith itself. The Congress eclipse from power came in a number of States, although discontent with Congress Raj rather than the total repudiation of the Congress was the verdict of the 1967 poll on the national scale.

The question that was posed by the masses by this new assertion of their strength through the ballot box was what is that we the millions have got out of

the free India that our blood and toil has helped to usher in? The demos gave exactly twenty years to the Congress leadership to answer this question. It could see with its own eyes that wealth in abundance has come in the hands of a few while the many have been left in the abyss of poverty, that the growth rate is not a barometer of the well-being of the millions.

And when the adequate answer did not come from the Congress leadership, there was a competition among other parties to claim the confidence of the millions. Many of them have still been contending to win that confidence, and they cover the parties of the Right as also of the Left.

Those of the Left in this respect have both better opportunity and greater responsibility, the anti-imperialist consciousness of the common man can be harnessed to greater purpose by the Left, while the Right has to go in for demagogic deception to appear as anti-imperialist before the masses, at the same time, it is the historic responsibility of the Left to see that the masses are not deceived, nor their energy dissipated, nor their outlook confused by squabbles in the leadership of the Left.

And what of the Congress itself? Just one year ago, in January 1969, when Smt Indira Gandhi told the Capital's press corps that she saw bigger crowds in her meetings than she had ever seen before—including the halcyon days of her father—many dismissed it as an exaggeration, others felt it was self-deception on her part. Her critics in the Congress—now in the rival Congress—retorted by saying that most of the places where she addressed huge crowds, the Congress lost in the mid-term poll.

What was missed in this whole controversy was that the masses did come—and have been coming in larger numbers—to listen to her, but not necessarily to vote for the candidates whom she backed. For, the milling crowds have ceased to come only to register their support for the Congress or to seek her darshan as they used to come to see

Gandhi or Nehru. In the last two years, the mammoth gatherings can be taken as an index of the persistent questioning in the mass mind what has she got to offer? It is not the euphoria of mass support but the testing time for the political leadership.

This is true in varying degrees for every party. When the two parties among the Communists or even the Jana Sangh face unprecedentedly large gatherings these days, it does not necessarily imply total support of the audience for the platform, but enhanced political consciousness in the millions, their growing power to discern and decide.

The compulsive factor behind the split in the Congress can be found in this new awakening of the masses. Gone are the days when the Congress could gather support just on the single plea of having won independence for this country, nor the promise of the pie in the sky can fetch votes. The reverses of 1967 led to serious thinking in the Congress, for suddenly the twenty-year base of political power seemed to come to an end.

Two opposite processes started side by side—at one end came the realisation of the need for a radical programme for early implementation, out of which was born the Ten-Point Programme at the poll-review AICC session in Delhi in June 1967, at the other end started Patil's talk of coalition with like-minded parties. Both the trends had their roots in the Congress—one trying to carry forward the heritage of radical advance and the other insisted on the defence of the status quo, one tried to attune itself to the new consciousness in the masses, and the other preferred to streamline the Congress in the style of an authoritarian organisation. Personalising politics, one could be termed as carrying the heritage of Nehru of the thirties and the other of Sardar Patel of the forties. Both had equal claims to the spiritual heritage of the Congress.

This duality began to express itself more sharply as the agonising journey to the inevitability of a split was traversed by Congressmen. Faridabad session, the parliamentary campaign on

the Birla probe and Morarji's exposure via Kanti, the Bangalore AICC with its economic note and the presidential nomination; Morarji's dethronement and bank nationalisation, Giri's victory and the fiasco of the Syndicate moves to dislodge Indira Gandhi, followed by the Delhi AICC, and finally the parallel gatherings at Ahmedabad and Bombay—all these are memorable milestones along the road to the disintegration of the political establishment that has so long ruled this country.

It would certainly be incorrect to say that all the reactionaries are in one camp while all the progressives are in the other. Nevertheless, it is undoubtedly true that the Syndicate has come to be regarded as a political junta that wanted to continue in the old way while Smt Gandhi has by and large been able to create the impression in a large section of the masses that she stood for change, and to bring that about, she did not hesitate to stand up to the entrenched bosses and to throw them out. History provides many such examples of the masses waiting far too long for change, discarding established leaders and giving a chance to new ones to fulfil their rising expectations.

But to ride on the crest of rising expectations is like riding the tiger. Smt Gandhi might have succeeded in riding the tiger, but if the tiger is not satisfied will it not devour her? Her friends have this fear while her enemies have this hope.

Where exactly does she stand? The clap-trap of socialism, so extravagantly heard not only in Bombay with Sri Chavan playing the host, but even in faraway Ahmedabad with Sri Morarji Desai playing the ringmaster. In fact, socialism has become one of the most fatuous clichés of Indian politics in the last two decades that finds its place even in the utterances of the Birlas. A more realistic claim made by Smt Gandhi herself in Bombay has been that her Congress stands for a Left-of-the Centre set-up in this country—if the Young Turks claim to provide the Left content, the Chief Ministers are supposed to form the core of Centrism in

her camp. Equally correct would it be to characterise the Syndicate as the Right-of-the-Centre—Morarji-Patil standing for the Right, and Sri Kamaraj for the Centre (much as he would still claim to be the Left).

The current tussles for alignments in Bihar and UP bear out such characterisations. Despite many of the SSP leaders' heroic efforts, the Syndicate's proximity to the Jana Sangh is undeniable as much as the Indira Congress having discarded its allergy of the Communists.

●

LOOKING at the Congress split in this way, one may be tempted to agree with the reported US appraisal of the current Indian scene, that this country is now well set on the road to a two-party system. According to this analysis, the two parties born out of the old Congress will hold the stage for quite sometime to come, like the Democrats and the Republicans in America. As for the other parties, those of the Right will be satellites of the Syndicate, and those of the Left will, by and large, hover around Smt Gandhi's Congress. For card-index research which has become the hallmark of American scholarship today, there seems to be no flaw in this appraisal.

Like the dogmatist of yesterday, what is missed by this appraisal is the magnitude of mass awakening in this country. As astute politicians, even the Syndicate leaders realise this, hence their clumsy efforts to put on the misfit clothes of radicalism. At the same time, they can hardly give up their strenuous campaign against any radical proposal: on the one hand, Smt Tarakeshwari Sinha's talks about scrapping property as a fundamental right, and, on the other, the Syndicate's propaganda that Indira Congress wants to take away property right as a whole.

Inside the Syndicate this issue has naturally given rise to inevitable differences for Sri Morarji Desai is anxious to emerge as the authentic voice of the Right, while Sri Kamaraj wants to cash in on the confusion and division

in the Left to take one section of it along with the Syndicate. At the State level even a hard-boiled reactionary like CB Gupta finds it convenient to play the radical to lure not only uncommitted Congressmen but the SSP as well with the help of his obedient camp-follower, Sri Raj Naram.

In this context, the Syndicate attaches great importance to the alignments in Bihar politics. If the SSP in Bihar could be won over by the offer of the coalition Chief Ministership, the Syndicate calculation is that there will be no effective resistance inside the SSP to the party's joining hand with the Syndicate in other States, because it is known that the dominant section of the SSP's Bihar unit leans towards Sri S.M. Joshi's stand against any truck with the Syndicate.

The Syndicate's objective is naturally to dislodge Smt Indira Gandhi from power. By its own reading of history, if she was dethroned, the regime would collapse, making way for its own raj. This is the extension of the time-honoured policy of palace intrigues, where the removal of the monarch could bring about a top-level coup. Despite its demagoguery to deceive the masses, this line of the Syndicate strategy makes it obvious that it does not hope to defeat her in open electoral verdict of the masses but through manipulations and manoeuvres.

However, the Syndicate's long-range calculation is that Smt Gandhi will be discredited by her own failure to meet the demands of the masses, the demands which will become more and more strident as the massive crowds in her meetings grow bigger and bigger.

In other words, the Syndicate seriously believes that the Frankenstein of mass pressure which Smt Gandhi has so long successfully used to corner the Syndicate, will eventually turn against her to bring about her downfall. The only snag in the Syndicate's logic is that the fast-radicalised masses, if they get disillusioned with Indira Gandhi's present stance, will not go back to the Syndicate fold, that the masses

once set in motion do not turn back to accept the old rulers but search for new leaders to take them forward.

It is not that Smt Gandhi or her camp is unaware of the risks of playing at high stakes. More than once in her recent observations she has warned about the danger of disillusioned masses turning against the very people who hold out promises to them. It is this realisation on her part which explains her persistent refusal at the Bombay Congress session to be hustled into any commitment on economic policy which her Government cannot immediately implement. And since the Bombay Congress, it is no secret in New Delhi that administrative and secretarial preparations for the implementation of economic policy commitments have been undertaken with a sense of urgency which was never seen before at the Centre.

While it is to be expected that some of the promised items will be implemented in the next few weeks, particularly during the Budget session of Parliament, there is no gainsaying that the Indira Congress has inherited some of the chronic handicaps of the old Congress which stood in the way of implementation of even enacted measures in the past.

For one thing, despite solemn talks of a "committed" leadership, it would be deceiving oneself to regard the new High Command as a team ideologically wedded to socialism: at best its commitment is to a programme of general welfare which in the words of the Bombay Resolution can be termed as "Growth with Social Justice".

This imperative for social advance comes from a sense of fear that bloodshed will start and the entire system over which they preside would be undermined in the context of the prevailing social tension in the countryside, that palliatives are necessary if the entire kingdom is not to be lost. Thus, important leaders in Smt Gandhi's camp would permit some remedial measures to

alleviate the conditions of the impoverished sections *without touching* the powerful vested interests. For, in its understanding, the engineers of "growth" embrace the powerful private sector interests as well. The fertilizer plant was sanctioned for the Birlas as the Birlas are not denied a place in Smt Gandhi's order of things; and the *quid pro quo* from the side of the Birlas is the political support which the power of the Birla resources can ensure for Smt Gandhi's Government. In the same manner, one would not be surprised if the Tatas' Mithapur project gets the go-ahead signal from the Government.

With such a strange mixture of welfare programme, with tolerance for the vested interests, it would be a Herculean, if not an impossible, task for her Congress to rear up a cadre which can work with dedication among the masses, a cadre with a clear perspective of what is to be done. For, the time for mere doing good is over, the politically conscious masses would demand the integration of the objective of social advance with day-to-day practice.

It is this shortcoming of a fragmented personality that is the besetting weakness of Smt Gandhi's phalanx. It is not that there is no subjective desire of many in her camp to do good turn to the have-nots. What they seem to overlook is that the have-nots are no longer the supplicants with the begging bowl. A new consciousness of strength has come in the masses, and that sooner or later—sooner rather than later—they will refuse to reconcile any concession to the vested interests with claims to radicalism, not to speak of socialism.

Apart from the danger of lagging behind mass consciousness, the economics of this strategy has a built-in weakness. If the Bombay economic programme is supposed to be only the first instalment of the Indira radicalism, then it has to take into account the need for raising resources on a large scale, for, no welfare programme can be implemented without sufficient resources in hand. And any drive for resources has got to touch the affluent minority in a

big way, even if there can be no drastic levelling in the present phase. Nobody expects Smt Gandhi to expropriate the Tatas or the Birlas; but if she is serious about her commitments to the common people—and that is what the masses coming to her huge meetings expect her to reiterate—then she has to touch somebody's pocket, particularly those whose pockets are bulging most. It is this simple economics which the common man in India's village understands and would not be confused by all the quibblings of the sophisticated specialists.

It is this dilemma that is bound to overtake Smt Gandhi. The way-out for her is to go boldly forward along the path she has chosen while overpowering the Syndicate. And it is the realisation of this development that calls upon the Left forces in this country to accelerate this process by generating the mass mobilisation that will demand of her and her camp to fulfil the commitments they have made.

Wisdom in the Left lies not in measuring the percentage of agreement with the Syndicate and of disagreement with the Indira Congress, or to take the posture of equidistance from both. The conscious masses who have forced the split in the Congress, demands of the Left a policy that can *unite all* the progressive forces, and not divide, treating others as untouchables. The masses after twenty long years of waiting for the Congress leaders to deliver the goods, are not likely to tolerate for long any theoretical hairsplitting or mutual bickerings and infantile adventurism on the part of the Left.

The perspective of the Seventies before forward-looking forces in India is to weld together a leadership that can pass the test posed by the mounting challenge of mass awakening. The wasted opportunities of the last two decades shall not be forgiven in the next by the awakened millions of this great country.

N.C.

January 20

Thoughts on Communalism Today

GIRISH MATHUR

THERE is a tendency in many quarters to regard Communalism as a chronic malaise of Indian politics. But an objective examination of the problem would bring out the essential difference between communalism of yesterday and that of today. Communalism after Independence needs to be differentiated from the communal problem before Independence.

Before Independence the question of power was at the root of the communal problem. In that period, Indian nationalism was coming into its own and demanding transfer of power. Faced with the formidable challenge of all awakened nation, the British had to take recourse to the time honoured stratagem of divide and rule.

Indianisation Theory

In order to prevent the integration of different sections of the Indian people into a modern nation, and to keep the people divided and fighting among themselves so that it is easier thus to retain power in their own hands, the British were (a) exploiting religious differences among the Indian people; (b) cashing in on the fact of the Muslims being in a minority and thus injecting separatist ideas among them; (c) encouraging narrow sectarianism among the Hindus, and (d) holding out the carrot of a share in power to the leaders of both the communities.

But after Independence, the question of power was settled and there was no third party to interfere in the relations between the two communities. The Indian Constitution gives equal

rights to all citizens and, thus, the minorities, particularly religious minorities, are in the eyes of the law co-sharers of power with the majority.

In such a situation, the communal problem today arises from attempts to deprive the Muslims of their rights, to treat them as second-class citizens. The concept of the Hindu Rashtra and the theory that the Muslims had to be Indianised, amounts to nothing short of denial of their fundamental rights to the Muslim citizens of India. The concept of Hindu Rashtra and of the theory of Indianisation of Muslims arise from the assumption that the Indian Muslims are not loyal to India and that their loyalty lies with Pakistan.

The question of loyalty of Indian Muslims it may be noted, was first raised by Sardar Patel when he demanded in one speech after another that the Muslims should give proof of their loyalty, and declared that they could not ride on two horses. The clash between Nehru and Patel began specifically on this issue. It is significant that on this issue, Gandhi, for the first time in his life, came out openly against Sardar Patel.

Frustrated Feelings

It is often found that communal violence is mentioned as one more manifestation of the violence that is in the air. But communal violence are not be equated with other forms of violence, such as student violence or violence during regionalist agitations, or the general law and order problem.

Violence of any kind should

be deprecated, but in the case of student agitations and in other agitation, violence often is an expression of the feelings of frustration in certain sections of our society, there is often no plan behind it, nor is it directed against another section of the society. But communal violence is aimed at physically eliminating one community, or to compelling it to give up its faith and subordinate itself to the majority community.

The Hindu Rashtra means that either the Muslims are physically eliminated, or they have to accept Hindu religion and live like a subject people, this is also what the theory of Indianisation means. It is necessary to point out clearly and quite sharply that the basic question today is to provide security of life to the minority community, the Muslims in particular.

Whether we are a secular state or not, whether socialism is our goal or not, every citizen has the right to live, every human being has the right to live. It should also be conceded that, rightly or wrongly, every Muslim in this country lives in fear of his life; and he needs to be provided a feeling of security.

We have to guard ourselves against another pitfall. Hindu communalism and Muslim communalism can not be equated and the difference in their characters has to be borne in mind. The very fact that the Muslims are in a minority gives them a feeling of insecurity, and this feeling is not only about their lives, but also about the future of their religion in this country. It is besides the point whether the feeling of insecurity is justified or not.

Because they are small in numbers, they feel they can be attacked and killed at any time, they know from actual experience that the machinery of law and order often fails to provide them protection and they are also susceptible to the misgiving that the Government and its machinery are not totally committed to the protection of their religion.

Under these circumstances, it is natural for them to try to live

in separate localities and even to make arrangements for their self-defence quietly, or making arrangements for the women and children to be collected at one place. It is equally natural for them to set up their own *madarsas* where religious teaching is imparted, and to send their boys to the Aligarh University and to insist on the maintenance of the Muslim character of the University.

Natural Tendency

As a result of the feeling of insecurity and attempts to make their own arrangements for safety, the feeling of separateness among them is strengthened. This separatism finds expression in two forms religious revival, as could be seen in the phenomenal increase in the membership, activities and influence of Tablighi Jamaat which is a non-political and purely religious organisation meant to propagate Islam; and the emergence of the isolationist Jamaat-e-Islami as the best organised and most influential party with the widest network of organisation and the largest cadre (both whole-time and part-time) among the Muslims

While the Tablighi Jamaat propaganda and activities are strengthening obscurantism, the Jamaat-e-Islami's effort is to create a feeling of pride in Islam; create self-confidence among the Muslims by insisting on the superiority of Islam over other religions, and convincing them to believe that ultimately Islam would win (*Ghalba-e-Islami*), to isolate the Muslims from others by pointing to the un-Islamic nature of Indian polity and economic practices and social reform policy, and by calling upon them to boycott the elections which are UnIslamic; and also to banks which charge interest, the Government services because the Government is answerable to (and therefore recognises the sovereignty of) the people as against the sovereignty of the Allah, and thus strengthen separatism.

It is significant that during the Muslim League agitation, no academic work was produced to

justify Muslim separatism, but the Jamaat-e-Islami has produced a lot of "academic" literature (historical, sociological, political) which shows the sweep of communal approach and its depth.

Communal Approach

As against this, the Hindu communalism today is militant, aggressive and out for the kill. It is interesting to note that like the Jamaat-e-Islami, the RSS also seeks to glorify the past, but it is not (unlike the Jamaat-e-Islami) revivalist, and its propaganda is not a call to return to religion, nor is it obscurantist in the sense of insisting on the dogmatic acceptance of the Hindu scriptures

Except for their attitude towards the Muslims, the RSS boys are as modern in their approach to social and even religious problems as the non-RSS Hindu boys. While the Jamaat-e-Islami calls for boycott of all that is modern, that is, un-Quranic, un-Islamic, the Jana Sangh seeks to capture political power and use all modern means of power to establish its own domination.

The RSS and the Jana Sangh together truly constitute a political movement. Even though they seek to appeal to conservatism, theirs is a reactionary movement. For the sake of clarification, it is worth noticing that one can be a conservative and devoutly religious Hindu without being anti-Muslim or even politically reactionary!

The Hindu communal approach is based on and fed on the glorification of the ancient past, ascribing the decline of Hindu power to the demoralising and demilitarising effect of Buddhism and Jainism which made it difficult for the Hindus to resist first the Muslim invasion and then the Christian power

The ancient past which is then glorified is a distortion of history to present an idealised version of what is described as Hindu polity. This is followed up by a distortion of medieval history to rouse the anti-Muslim sentiment and inculcate a sense of solidarity among the Hindus.



Thus, a feeling of revenge and hatred is sought to be created, and it is this which gives Hindu communalism a militant and aggressive character.

There is also an element of racialism in Hindu communal approach in as much as the superiority of the Hindu, the Aryan, is sought to be established, and the others are regarded as inferiors (while the Jamaat insists on superiority of its religion and calls for conversion of others irrespective of their racial stock to its fold) Sri Golwalkar's writings and utterances lay emphasis on racialism, but the Jana Sangh leaders are more cautious in this regard and speak in modern political idiom.

Thus, while every kind of communalism has to be condemned, it should be pointed out that the Muslim communalism is defensive, isolationist and revivalist, while Hindu communalism is militant, aggressive and political in character. This distinction should be made because it is necessary to demolish theories seeking to put both the types of communalism at par

From this distinction flows the conclusion that the Muslim defensive, isolationist and revivalist communalism can be checked only if the Muslims are given

protection from militant, aggressive and political communalism of the Hindus. Thus, the main task is to combat Hindu communalism. To the extent Hindu communalism is curbed, communalism among the Muslims can be checked. The task in concrete terms is to *provide* protection to the life and religion of the Muslims.

While Hindu communalism arises out of the desire to dominate, to monopolise power, Muslim communalism arises from a sense of grievance, a feeling of being neglected and discriminated against. While the desire to dominate has to be curbed, the grievances of the Muslims have to be removed.

Thus, two methods have to be adopted to deal with communalism—punitive measures, prohibitory steps and penal action against Hindu communalism, and positive approach based on justice and fairplay towards the Muslims.

Apart from being a minority, the Muslims, for historical reasons, are economically and educationally backward, this also accounts for the fear widely prevalent among them that they would be left behind in the race for development and reduced to being hewers of wood and drawers of water, in other words, menial job-doers. Special attention should be paid to their educational requirements and a well-thought-out attempt should be made to draw them into the economic life of the country, and to open new avenues of employment for them. Only when this is done, will it be possible to make social reforms like a common civil code acceptable to the Muslims.

It is often said that the Muslims have failed to produce a nationalist and liberal leadership. Such a leadership cannot arise as long as they live in fear and backwardness, because any Muslim leader who cannot provide an answer to their problems (born of fear and backwardness), will not be accepted by them.

A man like Sri Chagla is not accepted by the Muslims because he is just not aware of these problems and lives in a different

world. Maulana Azad, Hafiz Ibrahim, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai and even Sri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed became acceptable to the extent they showed awareness of these problems. But neither Azad nor Kidwai had an answer to their problems for the simple reason that they were not in a position to provide them security and remove their fears, nor can Sri Fakhruddin provide leadership.

An inhibiting factor in the emergence of a Muslim leadership which is nationalist, secular and democratic, is that the moment somebody draws attention to the problems of Muslims and seeks redress of their grievances, he is dubbed a communalist

Muslim Leadership

It should, therefore, be clearly recognised that putting forward the problems of Muslims or seeking redress of their grievances is not communalism, and that it is only a Muslim who can put across their point of view faithfully. If attention is paid to their problems, their grievances are redressed, and their fears removed, and also if the fear of being dubbed a communalist is removed, a new secular and liberal Muslim leadership will emerge and the Muslims will respond to the call for social reforms.

This is the only way to integrate them into national life. It is, therefore, urgently necessary to study the problems of the Muslims and appropriate measures taken for redress of their grievances. Without this the campaign against communalism would be meaningless and would not produce the desired results.

Hindu communalism has to be combated at three levels. Administrative action should be taken to check the outbreak of violence and, when it breaks out, by firmly put it down

Secondly, there should be political campaign against the Hindu Rashtravad, the Indianisation theory, the demand for proof of loyalty, and also against some other political arguments that justify Hindu communalism. For instance, it is said that the Hindu mind is agitated over the lot of the Hindus in Pakistan, that

Pakistani agents are behind the Indian riots.

Thirdly, it is necessary to expose the RSS distortion of ancient medieval and modern Indian history, and to popularise historical writings that seek to correct the distortions. A campaign of explanation about the character of democracy and the composite nature of our heritage has become a necessary corollary.

It is necessary to debunk the point sometimes made out in responsible quarters and even by Sri Jaya Prakash Narayan—which has been picked up by the Jana Sangh—that in most cases the communal disturbances take place as a result of some provocative action on the part of the Muslims. It may be true in a case that the first shot was fired by the Muslims, but we have to note that first, a situation existed in which a minor incident might have led to a flare up; and secondly, a minority living in fear, ready to defend itself, always tends to believe that an attack is in the offing and, therefore, do something to ward it off. A case of tense nerves is not surprising.

The guilty in a particular incident should be expeditiously punished, but the entire community should not be victimised for what an individual might have wrongly done.

For administrative action, the National Integration Council has made a number of recommendations. There implementation should improve the situation. The personal responsibility of the local authorities should be emphasised. On the question of personal responsibility, it may be pointed out that Sri Morarji Desai differed from Smt Gandhi and Sri Chavan, and agreed with the Jana Sangh line at the last meeting of the National Integration Council at Srinagar.

Another point which should be emphasised is that adequate representation should be given to the minorities in the law-and-order machinery to keep the authorities informed of what is happening among the minorities, to create a sense of confidence in the minorities, and generally to enable a secular approach to be adopted by the administration

Who Controls UN "Machine" ?

KRISHNA AHUJA-PATEL

THE Sixties have closed with a serious effort within the United Nations system to give a new dimension to development. A series of studies have been published to examine this question from various angles.

These have provided a new stimulant to discussions and seminars currently being organised by the United Nations. These works, displayed conspicuously, are also to be found at the desks of almost all the top men. More minutes and more files are being more rapidly passed around from one office to another.

Why all this activity? The simple reason is that the "machine" of international development assistance is becoming clumsy and heavy. It is reminiscent of the first steam engine which occupied a lot of room, made horrible noises and managed to move about only a few paces.

The first piece entitled the *Report of Second United Nations Development Decade* (UNDD II) bore the clear stamp of the UN, both in form and substance. Employing vocabulary which is sometimes called *unless*, the Report proposed broad economic and social targets for the developing countries. It attempted to spell out specific measures that need to be adopted at national and international levels. The eminent economists who prepared it, reduced it to generalisations with which no one could really disagree.

The second in this series was a much more elaborate affair. It was commissioned by the World Bank on behalf of the International Agency for Development under the chairmanship of a well-known personality, Mr Lester

Pearson. The study patronisingly named *Partners in Development*, took over eighteen months to put together. Its preparation involved some seventeen professionals, twenty-three consultants, ten research assistants, all or some of whom travelled widely, interviewing some seventy governments.

This exercise resulted in a book which is widely circulated and will be translated in eight languages. It includes some 64 recommendations in the field of trade, aid, private capital, research and technology and international monetary system. All these are designed to aid the poor on the road to development. These catalogue what the UN and agencies particularly UNCTAD, have repeated times without number at conferences. Although Pearson's Report does not succeed in its essential objective—that of grappling with the complex components of development—it may have some impact in certain circles not because of what it says, but because the words are put in the mouth of those who matter in the process of decision-making.

In contradistinction of the above two, the third work is almost revolutionary. Entitled *The Study of the Capacity of the United Nations Development System*, it was written at the request of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) by a staff of four professionals under the guidance of Sir Robert Jackson. As a part of the Establishment, Sir Robert carries out a thorough analysis of the malaise in the establishment. His diagnosis is devastating and his remedies are radical. The Jackson Report consisting of 600 pages in two volumes addresses itself to the

entrenched bureaucracy within and outside the United Nations system. The first volume, written in simple and cryptic sentences, is a summary of the larger Part II. This part examines the experience of the first twenty years of the operation of the system, identifies the main constraints and suggests procedures for future planning.

Multilateral development institutions are a post-war phenomenon and the United Nations Technical Assistance Programme began in a very modest way. In the field of aid distribution, the multilateral agencies enjoy a potential advantage over bilateral donors. Both political and technical factors are pushing all types of aid towards multilateral channels.

However, the voluntary contributions to the Expanded Programme since it began in 1950 has risen ten-fold: from 20 million dollars to 200 million dollars. The number of experts supplied to the developing countries under the UN system rose from about 1700 in 1952 to over 10,000 in 1968. The number of projects, operational under consideration and planned in over 100 countries, would be indeed difficult to count.

These figures tell an important tale and that is that the UN programme of development assistance has grown like a giant oak tree whose branches are all enmeshed and entangled. Therefore, it is not surprising that the "capacity" of the UN to cope with it all has led to a marked decline in its effectiveness. Sir Robert puts it correctly. "This 'Machine' now has a marked identity of its own and its power is so great that the question must be asked. Who controls the 'machine'?"

Analysis of projects financed by the UNDP reveals a regular pattern of delays in every phase of the project "cycle". There are delays and more delays between approval of a project signature of the plan of operations, between the signature and authorization, in the execution and the presentation of the final report. The Jackson Report implies that the specialised Agencies like FAO, ILO, WHO, etc. in their enthusiasm of one-upman-

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Oil Policy for Seventies

SAILEN GHOSH

An enlightened long-or medium-term oil policy must have as its frame of reference the availability of indigenous oil resource, the evolving pattern of demands, the dictates of strategy, the size of foreign exchange reserves and the level of national competence. Competence here is a factor affecting the future availability of oil. No other mineral calls for such resources of scientific intuitions, and physical concepts turned into instrumentation, as does oil buried deep in the subsurface.

Oil is both a fuel and a feed, and in both the roles versatile. Its greater efficiency, ease of transportation, cleanliness of handling and abundance of supply has earned it a pride of place as the world's most sought-after energy. But a country that has insufficient reserves of oil and large resources of coal can hardly allow the demand for oil to take its own course.

National Energy Policy

Fortunately, the demands for certain petroleum products are replaceable. The thermal power stations can be fired by coal instead of fuel oil. Fertiliser demand for naphtha as feedstock can be met not only by heavy residues, another petroleum product, but also by coal. The railways can reduce their demand for diesel by greater reliance on electricity based on coal, although electrification of railways means much heavier capital expenditure in terms of rupees. And refining technology is now flexible enough to *minimise* the imbalance between product demands and product yields. Oil policy must, therefore, be part of the national energy and feed policy.

The proved oil reserves within the country are of the order of 150 million tonnes, likely to yield eight or nine million tonnes per year. As against this, the demand for petroleum products by 1975 would rise to about 32 million tonnes, according to the Indian Institute of Petroleum's estimates. Some have even estimated the demand for 1980 at 50 million tonnes.

The question is not whether the demand, which stood at 16 million tonnes in 1968, can rise to 32 million tonnes in 1975. The question is, whether it can be permitted to rise to this extent. And if not, how demands of the economy can otherwise be met.

So long as we are deficient in crude production, there is an overwhelming case for restricting oil demand, which means, deterring every avoidable demand for oil and finding an alternative production process or feed-mix wherever possible, to meet the

economy's needs. This awareness was lacking in the past due to our absorption in plant-level economics to the detriment of national economy.

We are under a spell that all that matters is saving in the capital cost as if running costs do not matter; and even if they do, the recurring drain on foreign exchange does not. We are soaked in the idea that oil is the more efficient fuel, therefore, it does not matter even if we have to import more crude, "for, like Japan, we could build an economy on exports rather than curb the imports".

We forgot that an expansive economy too has to be restrictive in certain respects, that in a world of unequal partners, progress is marked by informed advance and planned retreats, and that the late starters on the road to industrialisation have unprecedented difficulties in promoting exports. Denial of imports has often led to innovations and new inventions, turning an inconvenient natural resource into the most convenient one. Keeping oil imports to the minimum is not only in the interest of our immediate national solvency, it is essential for the full development of potential of our major indigenous resource, coal. Given proper direction, it can even create an irresistible national impulse to be owners of oil, within the country and abroad, to the point of self-sufficiency. This is to say, it can lead to our international debut as an active explorer.

Far Smaller Price

Like any other deviation from the use of the more efficient resource, the proposed restriction on oil import, too, requires a price, though of a different kind. But this is a far smaller price from the viewpoint of national economy. Strategy also joins hand to support this line of approach.

Before we spell out the concrete proposals embodying the above approach, we must take note of the dissimilarities of our energy and feed situation with those of the USA or Japan and, for that matter, with the countries of Europe. The USA has plenty of both natural gas and coal. Its foreign exchange reserves will begin to soar, once the Vietnam War is stopped. Its deficit in liquid hydrocarbons is rather small; and with the US companies' international presence as major producers of oil, it has no cause for worry. It can be neutral between oil and coal. The high cost of its crude production at home is itself an encouragement to coal development. Even so, it is, in recent years, both for economic and security

MAINSTREAM

reasons, spending huge sums on research to produce synthetic oil from coal, shale and tar sands to be independent of outside supplies.

Japan, on the other hand, has neither coal nor liquid (or gaseous) hydrocarbons. Therefore, it, too, can be neutral between coal and oil. It can even be partial to the more efficient fuel, namely, oil and natural gas.

Our situation, in a limited respect, is like that of West Germany which has large reserves of coal and very little natural gas. It has large foreign exchange reserves and can afford to import large quantities of crude. Still, as a matter of social policy it has kept crude demand from going up. It is only very recently that with the availability of large quantities of natural gas from the Netherlands, it has modified its policy to a certain extent.

Advantage We Lack

The countries of Europe have yet another advantage which we lack. Multiple sources of oil supply are open to them. They had been receiving supplies from both the West Asian and Latin American countries and still stressing the need for six months' storage of crude for security reasons. It is only with the discovery of oil in a number of African countries—in other words, with an even greater diversification of sources—that the demand for stockpiling has abated in recent years. Even then, many European countries have launched their own companies for exploration abroad to ensure uninterrupted supplies at economic costs.

The sources of crude open to India and the countries east of Suez are not diverse. Even the Soviet crude has to take a long haulage from the Black Sea via the Mediterranean and the Red Sea to reach India's shores. Therefore, on grounds of strategy alone, we should limit our import requirements. To be able to do this, we must maximise the recovery of premium products and make certain changes in the orientation of product use. Particularly, the heavy petroleum fractions should not be used for power generation and fuelling of industries which coal can look after; they should be used to maximise the production of fertilizer feedstocks and middle distillates.

The premium products in this concept are the ones that increase the country's growth potential and not necessarily the ones that fetch higher values to refineries. A refinery's earnings may be the same whether it sells fuel oil to a power plant or to a fertilizer plant. But it contributes more to growth when it sells to the latter, for thereby it saves import of naphtha or ammonia. Since the real value of foreign currency to a developing country is greater than the official exchange rate, a refinery's return on investment and contribution to balance of payments should incorporate the use of appropriate "shadow prices" to reflect the real value it saves for the country.

Unawareness of the importance of the approach led in the past to committing natural gas and fuel oil to power plants and clearance to too many naphtha-based fertilizer plants whose ultimate effect would be to boost the country's crude import requirements.

It is useful to see the extent of reduction in the

crude requirement as a result of the changes suggested above. The Indian Institute of Petroleum has suggested that the demand for petroleum products, including refinery fuel and losses, would be 34 million tonnes by 1975. In this estimate the naphtha demand has been placed at about 4.7 million tonnes; its earlier estimate of naphtha demand was 5.3 million tonnes. This substantial drop in the estimate has been due to the Government's approval of four coal-based, instead of naphtha-based, fertilizer plants.

If the Government decides in favour of a couple of coal-based plants at Mirzapur, (UP) and Chanda (Maharashtra), if it issues a national decree banning the use of fuel oil for future power plants (including expansion of the existing plants), and encourages the setting up of hydrocrackers for middle distillates, the demand for crude in 1975 may well be 27 million tonnes instead of 34 million. Similarly, by the end of the seventies, the demand may well be 34 million tonnes instead of rising to 45 million tonnes. The deciding factors, as the Institute of Petroleum has correctly pointed out, is the policy the Government adopts.

The importance of banning the use of fuel oil for power generation needs to be clearly grasped. There are substantial quantities of fuel oil and "other residues". If they are nearly all reserved for nitrogen production by partial oxidation and middle distillate production by hydrocracking, the upward thrusts now being delivered from each of the naphtha, diesel, and kerosene sectors for lifting the refining capacity, will disappear. Apart from keeping the crude requirement to the minimum, it has the merit of mitigating crisis in the coal industry and the attending social unrest. There is no logic in draining the national reserves, on the one hand, and creating crisis in a national industry (and in the mining machinery manufacture industry), on the other.

Mitigating Coal Crisis

Adoption of this course would mean that even the expansion of Barauni, Uttran, Ahmedabad, Namrup and Koyna power plants would have to be based on coal. No doubt, the plants in the Western region, because of their remoteness from coal fields, would not like this step. But the people of the concerned States should realise that this would hasten the development of coal mines in Maharashtra and Assam and the lignite resources of Gujarat and Rajasthan. Till such time as this development takes place, there can at best be a subsidy for coal-use, shared by the Central and State Governments, to cushion the incidence of additional freight.

But, if the problem is not merely of freight but of propensity to use the more sophisticated fuel, it has to be curbed. In Japan, they use even inferior grades of coal for power generation. In our particular circumstances, we have much greater reason to use coal for power generation and as industrial fuel. Incidentally, the Energy Survey of India Committee's recommendation for increasing the price differential between A and B grades of coal to make the latter attractive even to the outlying regions, could go a long way to promoting this trend. Perhaps the

existing ownership structure of the collieries has stood in the way of its implementation.

Fuel cost, except in a few industries like chemicals and cement etc., accounts for only about five to six per cent of the total manufacturing cost. The prices of export products, therefore, have no reason to be affected in this scheme of subsidy during the interim period. In any case, it is always open to the Government to make exceptions in appropriate cases. What is, however, important is the cooperation of the governments of the oil-producing States. If they give some consideration to the overall national problem, the implementation of this policy will not at all be difficult. And this consideration they owe to themselves, for only by working jointly for national solvency, can they provide the wherewithal for fresh new ventures in their States

Hydrocracker for Middle Distillates

In Indian conditions, hydrocracking for naphtha is nonsense,¹ but hydrocracking for high speed diesel (HSD) and kerosene is eminently sensible. An eminent refinery technologist, Sri C.R. Dasgupta, has recently worked out in broad outlines the economics of hydrocracking, which bears scrutiny. What is, however, important is the acceptance of the principle. It is not altogether a technological question, it is equally a question of financial approach and political understanding.

If refineries are built with a minimum capacity of three million tonnes, each of them can supply straight-run naphtha for a huge 1,000-tonne per day ammonia plant. It can also supply part of the "residues" for yet another ammonia plant of the same capacity. The rest of the "residue" can be used for hydrocracking (or coking-cum-hydrocracking) to produce middle distillates equivalent to their yield from one million tonne crude.² This means, it saves the import of every fourth million tonne of crude—the fourth million needed primarily to balance the demand for these very products.

It may possibly be argued that products other than middle distillates recoverable from the fourth million tonne of crude will be lost to the country. But motor spirit is the most important of the remaining products; and a hydrocracker of half a million tonne capacity will yield as much as 50 per cent of the motor spirit recoverable from this fourth million tonne crude—that too high octane.

It is true that we would be losing the residue from that one million tonne of crude, but residue is already surplus in the country moreover, the overall policy should be to discourage the use of residue as fuel, to prevent it from cutting into coal's market. The distance of certain provinces from the *developed* coalfields should not be allowed to blur the overall national perspective. The problem has to be tackled by other means suggested above.

But there is yet another problem. The total *capital cost* of a hydrocracker of half a million tonne capacity, including the vacuum unit, hydrogen plant and offsite, will be around Rs 15 crores. This money has to be found for each three-million-tonne refinery. Besides, the recurring raw material (that is,

residue) and operating expenses will come to about Rs 10 crores. But the revenue from the sale of gas, high-octane motor spirit, kerosene and HSD would be only Rs 8.5 crores, leaving a gap of Rs 1.5 crores per year to be met by subsidy. The cost cannot be fully recovered because increasing the price of kerosene, one of the two major products, seems politically not feasible. If there are only four hydrocrackers in the seventies, it will mean a subsidy of Rs 6 crores annually. But this is certainly better than a national waste, every year, of Rs 35 crores in precious foreign exchange. The difference, that is, the amount of national saving, will increase with the years.

It is possible that a proposal involving a subsidy will not find favour with some. The bureaucratic management of the economy, which did not measure its success in terms of diffusion of initiative, has created so much distortion that any talk of performance subsidy may cause fright. But we must remember, the distortion was permitted by the absence of imaginative decentralisation, and lack of performance audit at every level. At the root of all was the drying up of the national impulse. We must not, in the manner of a burnt child, dread everything as fire and swing from one pole to another.

National Impulse Absent

A developing country cannot progress without disciplining its demands and planning its product pattern. Open subsidies (as distinguished from veiled subsidies under political pressure) creates no serious problem. It does not blur the index of operational efficiency. The need is only to develop a system of national accounting at the top level as cost accounting on the unit-level.

Rationalisation of the pattern of oil products' demand and supply, as a part of national energy and feed policy, also demands consideration of low-temperature and/or fluidized carbonisation (or continuous devolatilization)³ of the weakly caking or non-caking coals and high-ash caking slacks for production of *smokeless* domestic coke and coal gas. They are a substitute for kerosene as a cooking fuel in the urban areas.

Produced cheaply, the coke⁴ can even wrest the rural folk from the habits of burning firewood and cowdung and thereby conserve both the forest and the soil, apart from conserving metallurgical coal.

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¹This is because we do not require much motor spirit as some countries in the West do. Our requirement of naphtha is for synthesis gas production for fertilisers. We can do it straightway by partial oxidation.

²A hydrocracker with a throughput of half a million tonne residues will yield four lakh tonnes of middle distillates. The same amount is available from 1 million tonne of crude by the usual distillation method.

³This is developed by the Central Fuel Research Institute, Dhanbad.

⁴For the low-income group of urban people and the vast rural population, the cheap coke can be produced only by continuous devolatilization, otherwise known as stoker carboniser process, which does not require much capital. There would be no scope of by-products recovery in this process.

Scientific Socialism and Social Change

S. C. SUBRAMANYAN

THE dust and din of the "showy" sessions of the two Congress has begun to settle. The Republic's new year opens with the question: can the country move forward to socialism?—and how?

In a speech at Midnapore, after the Bombay session, Smt Indira Gandhi has said: "It is we, the Congress, alone who can deliver the goods to the people and make the country modern, strong and progressive." It is well to give here what Smt Gandhi said while speaking at the Bombay Congress session also. "Despite all the development that had taken place since Independence, sections of the people had been deprived of its fruits."

The resolution on the economic programme adopted at that session also admits: "Despite visible changes in the pre-Independence structure of India, certain sections of the community have amassed enormous wealth and, taken as a whole, tens of millions of people still live in conditions of poverty."

Twenty-two Years

"This admission comes after the Congress has been in power with an absolute majority for 22 years, despite the formulation of "socialistic" policies at Avadi in 1955 and reiterated at Bhavnagar in 1961 and Bhubaneswar in 1964, as also a Ten-Point Programme in June 1967. Now there is yet again talk of the "time for action" and the "battle for socialism"!

It is not only the Congress that talks so much about socialism. Many of the parties that managed to forge some sort of electoral alliance or understanding

to defeat the monopoly of power enjoyed by the Congress, talk of Socialism including regional parties like the DMK in Tamil Nadu. I remember the late C. N. Annadurai saying that while the Congress stood for democratic socialism his party believed in scientific socialism. Then, there are various other parties of the "Left" like the SSP, PSP, FB, RSP, etc. which also swear by socialism. There are the Communist Parties, Right and Left, and the extreme groups impatient of the slow advance, frustrated by the barren results of planning, which have taken the road of anarchist violence, all of them claiming to be Marxists or Marxists-Leninists.

Desperate Appeal

Why should so many of the parties take the pose of being socialist? Indian economy remained very backward under British imperialism, the highest stage of capitalist exploitation. It is natural that the mass of the people drawn into the struggle for Independence should look to socialism as the system that would really improve their conditions. To the mass of the people whose life was one of poverty and stagnation, Independence meant a new life that would put an end to their age-long poverty.

While the politically conscious working class can easily see the falsity of the claims of most of these parties, only the *experience* of the gap between promise and performance the failure of the other parties to lead the people on to a better life, teaches the other sections of the mass of people to think why they have not moved forward

In order to prevent the alienation of the masses, the Congress leadership is making a desperate attempt to keep them under their leadership by promising a "faster" movement towards socialism by warning them about the extremism of the Left and the Right, by appealing to them to follow the so-called democratic path, by calling for a "nationalist" path for a peaceful revolution "aimed at making the country economically independent and stable".

They desperately appeal to those who have reaped the fruits of development since Independence, to realise their responsibility to the society—for what purpose "to avoid social tensions".

A few days earlier, Smt Gandhi had said in a circular letter to the Congress workers that the lesson of 1967 General Elections and the subsequent mid-term elections in a few States showed that the pace at which the Congress moved was not enough, and if the Congress was to save itself and save the country from a violent revolution, it should take some energetic steps to implement its social policies.

Thus arises the conflict between the promises they have to make to meet the needs of the situation and the desire to preserve "order".

To the majority of the peasants socialism means freedom from the misery under which they work, either as tenant farmers or as agricultural labourers—a condition in which they find that they have not enough to feed either themselves or their families or of even find around the year

Widening Gulf

To the small peasant working on his own piece of land, socialism means an assurance that the product of his efforts will not be lost in the repayment of the debts he incurs, and that he can look forward to better living conditions.

The large sections of working class in urban centres, find that the gap between them and the owners of factories and establishments where they work is

widening; the agricultural labourer, the tenant farmer and the small peasant find that the gulf between them and the bigger landowners and few enterprising farmers has grown enormously over the years; a larger number of educated youths find that they do not have any prospect of fruitful employment.

Further, the periodical fluctuation in industrial activity, so characteristic of capitalistic organisation—we had an experience of it in 1967-68—leads to insecurity of employment even in urban centres. Rising prices of foodstuffs and necessities hit the lower middle class employees and the non-availability of these to the poor aggravate their misery. It has become fashionable to talk of socialism and each party has its own programmes to put an end to all these. But if one analyses what most of these parties say, it all amounts to nothing more than improving the lot of the under-privileged, “curb on privileges and monopolies” “fairer distribution of what is produced”.

These parties believe that all this mishmash of ideas, the humanitarian liberalism which either fails to see or avoids the question of class antagonism, is socialism. They do not analyse the social forces at work and think that all that is necessary is to draw up a programme of more production, a wider distribution of industries, owned by small entrepreneurs and a technological revolution in agriculture, and they will be on the road to socialism.

Thus, the Congress in its Bombay session, drew up a programme for extending the revolution in agricultural production to the dry areas, making credit available to the tillers, laying down a time limit for implementing the land reforms, and laying emphasis on widespread small-scale industries. These attempts, even if they succeed, will not do away with exploitation and no true socialist can agree that this would mean socialism.

The erstwhile leadership of the Congress, now split into two give different reasons for their

past failures. One group blames the other directly or indirectly. But at every stage when they designed any serious measure to implement one or the other of their objectives, they came across obstacles of established institutions, their legal rights and political influences.

Property Right

It is interesting to note that it is the ruling Congress that has actually to pose the question of amending the Constitution in respect of the provision relating to the Fundamental Right to property. Keeping in view perhaps the practical difficulties that arise when the legislation gets struck down by the Courts in their interpretation of the Constitution. Smt Gandhi in her speech at Bombay is reported to have said: “Laws are not immutable. Neither did they stand good for all times. Laws reflected the needs of society at a particular time of its growth. Once that situation changed Laws must also change.”

Thus, the question of alteration of what may be called the fundamental laws has come up. One can visualise a situation which may well lead to a demand for a new Constituent Assembly and a new Constitution to implement the declared objectives. And one may even wonder if it is not a distant echo of real democracy!

In trying to understand why, in spite of so many parties saying that they stand for socialism, there is no advance towards it, it is well to find out what is meant by socialism and how it is going to be achieved.

There is a fundamental difference in the approach to the problem between that of the other parties and the parties of Marxism-Leninism. While the other parties try to maintain that what Marx and Engels said about capitalism is no longer valid, the Communists take their stand on the basis of the Marxist view of the class structure of the society. To them, socialism is the social system that will take the place of the capitalist society and the instrument or the force that will

bring about the downfall of capitalism and build socialism, has grown and is growing in this capitalist society.

The Communists hold that while all other classes, however well meaning their intentions, cannot fight for the abolition of all exploitation—since in all of them there are elements that exploit the labour of others—only the working class, the proletariat, can consistently fight for socialism.

To the proletariat it is not pious declarations or well drawn plans that will bring about the end of the exploitation; nor even the sincere desire to have a “faster pace”; but the objective material conditions that will determine the stage at which the system of exploitation, can be ended. They understand the existing social institutions, the legal and political superstructure as the necessary instrument fashioned by the needs of capitalistic economy. When the material conditions change to such an extent that the system of production and production relations existing in the present society no longer correspond to the development of productive resources of the society the old Order must change.

Fundamental Difference

This is the scientific analysis of historical development, change of social systems. Thus, Marx said, “In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of the society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life condition the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that

(Continued on page 73)

Judiciary: Our Tryst with Destiny

JUSTICE V.R. KRISHNA IYER

WHEN the Indian story after Independence comes to be written, critics prophesy, only a few dubious pages may be devoted to the judiciary of the first quarter century of the Republic because the national balance sheet shows against it more debits than credits. Placed among the three great institutions of democracy, our Judicial Department has been assigned an important role in the Indian Constitution the key-note of which is justice—social, economic and political

A country, steeped in material and cultural poverty and wrapped in a feudal economy and mentality, venturing on a revolutionary course, needs vibrant instruments and activist cadres tuned to the national urges and aspirations! And the question that is being obstreperously and currently debated is. Has the Indian judicature sustained or stalled the constitutional evolution of a just society? Has it helped or obstructed the new rule of law which breathes the spirit of rapid but peaceful democratic changes in the economic, political and social fields in response to popular demands *in accordance* with law and not *in defiance of law*? Lawless protests, even if understandable, present the peril of breeding para lawless counter-pressures, both together contributing to a stalemate, instability and chaos or political free-for-all in the country, pushing back national advance and social change.

Quiet of Storm Centre

It is in this context that we have to view the demand for judicial activism and the force in the charge that the judiciary squints towards the status quo and looks amance at rapid legislative action. The constitutional fires of socio-economic controversy have been raging in the highest courts in the land for some years now, even as counsel have elaborated endlessly the legal nuances relating to land legislation and socialistic measures, and learned judges have independently delivered formidable pages of scholarly and contradictory opinions. But all this has affected the country's destiny a great deal and in a profound sense, so much so that an Indian judge may repeat about our Supreme Court and High Courts, the words of Justice Holmes "We are very quiet there, but it is the quiet of a storm centre"

The founding fathers of the Constitution—the appellation euphemistically applied to the members

of the Constituent Assembly—must have had high expectations about the judiciary in India playing an active role in bringing about the social revolution which would fulfil the national aspirations "Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially." This was the voice of India speaking, and twenty-two years after, Indian masses wonder whether the judiciary has redeemed its portion of the pledge.

Modern Vocabulary for Judiciary

When I wore the judicial robes, I hopefully replied to the felicitatory speeches from the bar, in these words "In India today, Judges have not merely to adjudicate on rights and wrongs, but have to be sentinels on the *qui vive*. They face newer challenges, shoulder a vaster range of responsibilities in upholding the Constitution and the Laws. For, Justice is an ampler, truer concept and the rule of law a more positive and dynamic idea, with socio-economic content and political overtones not implied in them by orthodox jurists. The social goals enshrined in the Preamble to our Constitution, the Fundamental Rights Chapter and the Directive Principles of State Policy broadly and vaguely project our current legal philosophy. The judicial organ being part of the State, shares the national objective and perspective of political and economic democracy, and spells out from the Articles of the Constitution the legal framework of a secular society with egalitarian urges, thus departing from the old order and conservative common law concept. The judges and the Courts are, in a sense, themselves on trial. The forensic institutions and the legal system itself needs a new orientation, a modern grammar and vocabulary and simpler techniques of social engineering, if they are not to be accused of being exotic, expensive, obsolescent and tardy features. I shall endeavour, in a humble measure, to be a judicial activist and treat my career ahead as a fresh call to service in the cause of the rule of law, which not merely keeps the executive in leash but insists upon the basic and equal right of every individual to a really free and good life. The magnitude of the danger to the Rule of Law is great in these days of self-righteous violence and mass violation of law where rioting is confused with revolution and organised disregard of law is considered the route to

a higher form of democracy ”

National progress is currently challenged from both ends. Those who believe in violent overthrow of the present regime and in the preparatory phase of anarchy are as dangerous as those who, by using their enormous money power suppress by legislative measures and circumvent by forensic tactics the imperative demand of the masses for an immediate improvement in their lot. Frustration and fury, fostered by hopeless mass poverty and social iniquity, are enemies of the rule of law. Glancing at the national scene today, we find that organised lawlessness as a way of achieving objectives is becoming ubiquitous and, worse, respectable; and at the other end money power is able to overcome or shelve all administrative and legislative measures to reorganise land ownership and the economic order, and still get away with it through long-drawn-out legal battles where direct pressure fails.

The assumption that those whose legal or constitutional rights are violated would prefer redress in the courts and in the legislatures and not by force is being belied by current events, and direct action—violent mostly and thinly non-violent, sometimes—is commanding popular appeal. Only by demonstrating that there are reasonably effective, readily available and sympathetic legal alternatives to violent procedures, can we win over desperate sections of the community to a faith in rule of law. The new dimensions of this dynamic concept need fuller understanding. The rule of law is not mere legalism, the broader conceptions of socio-economic justice are embraced by the term.

Socialist Commitment of Constitution

The framers of the Constitution, in the Preamble as well as in the Directive Principles of State Policy, expressed the social conscience of the nation. Concentration of wealth and the means of production in a few hands was to be avoided being to the detriment of the community, and a fair share of the good things of life was to be assured to every one. In short, there was a socialist commitment in the Indian Constitution and the fundamental rights were to be read in this light. The leading ideas of the Constitution were sufficient to impress upon the major institutions of national life, including the judiciary which owed its creation and independence to the provisions of the Constitution, that economic as well as political democracy was the direction of the nation's march.

However, there was some fear and mistrust in the minds of the Constitution makers about the judiciary. Alladi Krishnaswami Iyer put it thus: “The doctrine of independence is not to be raised to the level of a dogma so as to enable the judiciary to function as a kind of super-legislature or super-executive.” Vallabhbhai Patel, a comparative Tory in politics, had shown a wariness of conservative judges when he said in the Advisory Committee: “There is a danger that a certain old type of Judges may misinterpret this new process of law.” But let us glance through the performance report.

The Indian Judiciary, the higher echelons parti-

cularly, have shown an admirable amount of independence even in the great days of Nehru and the mighty era of the Congress, and have been the bastion of personal liberty. The judges at the High Court and Supreme Court levels have displayed great learning, imaginative understanding and progressive thought when freedom of movement and association and the unity of the country have been involved. The exposure of ministerial abuse of power, the call to order of administrators, high and low, when they have deviated from legality and fair-play, are signal services the Indian Judges have performed.

Concept of Natural Justice

The noble, pervasive, judge-made concept of natural justice has revolutionised administrative processes and prevented, to a degree suspicious governmental behaviour to the great satisfaction of the humble citizen. The principle of equality has been imparted new dimensions by judicial decision, and executive fiat and arbitrary conduct have been checked by judicial vigilance. Even the legislatures, when they have outrun their limits to invade the liberty of citizens have been kept within their bounds.

Personal integrity and dignity of a high order have been maintained by the judicial personnel in the higher courts, so much so that individual citizens have hopefully moved the court for remedy even when pitted against government, unscrupulous yet powerful individuals or institutions. Even when public scandals or calamities or high-level official misconduct have needed an open, fearless and thorough probe the people and legislatures have demanded a “judicial” enquiry. When arbitral situations have arisen, where states have clashed against each other or with the Centre, and large chunks of people have been emotionally involved on either side, judicial pronouncements have helped the nation find its enlightened course. The Indian judiciary has served the country in a high and reverential measure and has been regarded as the finest national institution demonstrating strength, unity, calmness, aloofness, and an integrated mind, and has shown, during the spell of Justice Gajendragadkar particularly, some sympathy for the working class. Many shortcomings notwithstanding, the consciousness of the Indian community has been given a vague sense of confidence in the rule of law by the presence of the Supreme Court and the High Courts.

And yet the justice department is being charged today with placing road-blocks in the way of social justice. Indeed, it has become the vogue with some political parties to denounce, and is becoming the fashion among some brands of progressive intellectuals to blame our country's backwardness on the judiciary, leading to the erosion of its authority and people's faith in its utility and credibility. Of course, what the judiciary does is mainly to interpret and apply the law and if incompetence is shown by the Legislature in the making of laws the blame for it cannot always be placed on the Judges. Great care must be taken not to undo the paramount position of the judiciary since the tragic consequence of the downfall

of an independent and progressive Judicature is a fascist regime and an end of the rule of law. Can it be that the judicature, in spite of outstanding showing in some aspects, has offset it all otherwise?

Left intellectuals complain that progressive legislation bringing about socialist change has been greeted with a kind of judicial scorched-earth policy. It is fundamental for the progress of this nation that drastic changes in land ownership must be effected and peasant proprietorship extensively inaugurated. This certainly would mean interference with the property rights of those who control the vast land resources in the State. Similarly, nationalisation is essential in the key sectors of industry and commerce and sensitive areas of national life if the economic uplift of the community at large were to be organised effectively and national security made a reality. This would mean interference with the right of monopolists and big industrial magnates. The question of just compensation will also arise in a big way.

Social and Cultural Equality

Again, in a stratified society, social and cultural equality can not be effected without large-scale conferment of special advantages to backward sections in the matter of education and employment in public service. It is iniquitous to treat unequal things equally and a seeming negation of equality between the formed and the backward strata may still be just and may take us, in the long run, to real equality. Education and the right type of it, largely financed by the State exchequer, is of such strategic significance for secular, national progress that State direction and control, regardless of private rights, is of supreme importance. The right to a living wage and other like rights which make life worth-while to the working class involve social control of private enterprises. Thus, the social philosophy of our Constitution, which must be regarded as fundamental to the governance of the country, cannot be given practical shape without extensive legislative surgery. And when all this was undertaken, the affected vested interests engaged Government in a series of court confrontations.

The critics would have it that in this forensic duel the judicial slant in favour of the *status quo ante*, judging by results. The courts applied the law of the Constitution to the vast output of hasty, unpolished though forward-looking, laws issuing from the half-trained and impatient Assemblies and Parliament. The judicial microscope discovered many extraneous bodies and viruses; the remedy of *ultra vires* was applied. Statutes were struck down as unconstitutional and agrarian reform measures, State monopoly bills and nationalisation schemes fell at the altar of fundamental rights. Most official schemes or legislative measures—fiscal, agrarian, social, educational—invariably went to the court and no one could predict what this “Third House” might do.

Even as early as 1957, inaugurating an All-India Law Ministers' Conference, Prime Minister Nehru exhorted the judges to come down from the “ivory tower”, sympathise with the Legislatures which had

a thousand things which as awakened but deprived people urgently wanted and, even while correcting mistakes where they had gone wrong, not to be too meticulous, too fastidious in the examination of every measure, striking them down right and left. (I am summarising from memory what I then heard as a Minister myself). Much earlier, in the Constituent Assembly, he had warned “No Supreme Court and no judiciary can sit in judgment over the sovereign will of Parliament representing the will of the entire community”.

And did not Franklin D. Roosevelt say about “the nine old men” in Washington? “The Court, in addition to the proper use of its judicial functions, has improperly set itself up as a third House of the Congress—a super-legislature, as one of the Justices has called it—reading into the Constitution words and implications which are not there and which were never intended to be there. We have, therefore, reached the point as a Nation where we must take action to save the Constitution from the Court and the Court from itself. We must find a way to take an appeal from the Supreme Court to the Constitution itself. We want a Supreme Court which will do justice under the Constitution—not over it”.

History of Constitutional Amendments

The chronicle of constitutional amendments will tell how the courts began striking down enactments invoking the Fundamental Rights and other provisions and Parliament answered back by amending the Constitution itself. And when Parliament found that the court, in its interpretation of some of the fundamental rights, was at cross-purposes with the legislators' vision of an agrarian revolution and economic reorganisation, it resorted in the clumsy device of creating a freezing chamber called the 9th Schedule where many land laws (and one tax law) were stowed for immunising them from attack by courts. Then why have courts and fundamental rights? And one judge facetiously asked me—but with a profound implication he probably did not intend—than why not a schedule of judges who should not decide such matters? Indeed, the critics are underscoring the class character, the sub-conscious sympathies and the social philosophy of the men who wear the judicial robes.

Anyway, matters came to a head when the judiciary met the challenge of the famous XVIIth Amendment in the equally famous Golak Nath case by upholding the immutability of Part III of the Constitution. Undaunted, Parliament is amending the amendatory provision in the Constitution.

The Supreme Court and High Courts—to be frank with facts—did not take kindly to drastic control of or interferences with private property, private trade, private sector education and using what I might describe as the ‘Marshall’ power, nullified many administrative and legislative scheme meant to give life and substance to the concept of social economic justice and cultural development. Quite often these measures were the product of poor drafting, immature consideration and inadequate education of law-makers in the complicated but paramount

law of the Constitution. Haphazard amendments hurriedly implanted, or sudden delations of parts of clauses at the spur of the moment, are not uncommon, if we know the ways of our Legislatures. Political, communal and regional appeals and ideological approaches to which the legislator and minister are particularly sensitive warp or distort a bill or government policy, and it behoves the court to scrutinise, free from these adulterant sentiments and dictates of exigencies, and on the enduring provisions of the nation's Constitution, their validity and, when found wanting, fearlessly put its foot down on them.

But when it tangles underfoot whatever, by training, tradition, beliefs and association, it abhors—there's the rub! Some political parties in Kerala were angry when in the name of Fundamental Rights, the Kerala Agrarian Relations Bill was struck down. And now there is chagrin among many educationists and student organisations at the fate of the Kerala University Act, again on the score of violation of Fundamental Rights. People, here and there, ask, which is more fundamental—the nation's progress or Part III as judicially expounded? Others, not prone to asking questions which is an inconvenient democratic process, have shouted slogans against judges at the High Court gates and threatened trespass into 'judges' lands! The mischievous suggestion is that judges, after all, are themselves of the landowning class.

The judicial process is not to be scared into submission by denunciation, demonstration or threat of violence. That way lies totalitarianism, not constitutional democracy. At the same time, mists of uncertainty overhang every major measure approved by the Executive and the Legislature, thanks to the all-pervasive presence of the Judiciary acting like the Upas tree! Even in the USA only six congressional Acts have been invalidated by judicial review in the long spell since 1937, while India has had more such casualties in much less time. I have no doubt the solution is not to "down" the judiciary but, while keeping it untouchable and unapproachable by extra-judicial elements, mend the institutional defects. We can slip back to the days of Coke and King James. Nor can we forget Roosevelt's exasperation when "the nine old men" of the U S Supreme Court threatened to invalidate his new deal! Even so, is there any estrangement between the major institutions of the Judiciary and the Legislature-cum-Executive?

Law on Parliamentary Privilege

The House versus the Court and the Executive versus the Court are conflicts which should be avoided by each functioning within its allotted sphere, in a spirit of comity and inspired by common goals. In this regard, the Supreme Court has given widespread satisfaction. When the House confronted the Court in the epic battle between the Allahabad High Court and the U P Legislatures, the Supreme Court authoritatively delineated the area of the powers, privileges and immunities of the Legislature in the context of the fundamental rights of the citizen, the justiciability of such questions and the degree of vulnerability of

judges to the contempt process of Parliament. A few decisions of the Supreme Court have covered this ground.

Those who are dissatisfied—there are many—with the fact that the privileges of the House are those which prevailed in England at the time Indian Constitution was made, must turn to the parliamentarians and ask why when Articles 105 (3) and 194 (3) of the Constitution made a transitory provision and empowered the Indian Legislatures to make laws on the subject, there had been inaction for so long a period. The recent case in Kerala, where the Chief Minister was summoned by the Court to answer a contempt charge, also made many people wonder why we are still administering the English law of contempt while conditions in India are widely different, and even the American law on the subject is at variance with the English law. Here again, the Legislature has not activated itself to make appropriate law in this behalf (Schedule VII List III Item 14).

The pity is that when courts are called upon to administer the law, they have merely to enforce what is the current law. If it is dated, undemocratic or objectionable, it is a criticism of the legislator and evidence of his indifference and not a stick to beat the court with. But the common people wrongly feel that the Court has created that law, forgetting that the power to make and modify the law of contempt rests with the Legislature which has been indifferent to the need for making an Indian law of contempt of court. When the politician blames the judge for the ills of society, please look out for a false plea of alibi. For, the ills that law and its enforcement breed can be set right in large part by dynamic new legislation which is the politician's job. Failing in that duty, he misleads people by calling judges names.

Legacy Left By British

We need a structural re-organisation of the judicial set up, we want an efficient law agency representing the State which is the largest litigant in the High Court. We want a liaison between the courts and government so that a mutually responsive relationship can be established and follow-up measure undertaken promptly. We want a legal aid scheme so that no man shall suffer because he is poor. We want the market price for claiming justice from the State, otherwise called court-fees to be reduced and expenses of litigation brought under control. We want judges to meet at State and all-India levels, and undergo specialised refresher courses. A hundred more things we want. But, for all this the legislature and the executive must act—act with sapience and celerity. Unfortunately, those who man these departments of the State may often be orthodox and do not sufficiently appreciate the need for originality and dynamism but hide these deficiencies from themselves and the public by going at the tongue-tied (by tradition) judges. The best art of defence is attack.

Indian Judges have been too sensitive to criticism which in America would have been quite common and in England, judging by Lord Denning's recent

observations, would have been left to the people to judge instead of making forensic fuss about it. Nevertheless, it may not be altogether out of place to say that the judiciary in India, from the lowest rung to the highest, keeps so far away from the ordinary life of the community that many of them are touchy when even judgments or court practices are legitimately criticised. They believe in a special halo about courts and frown upon any intrusion into their doings or their sacred precincts.

Here, as in many other aspects of judicial life, the legacy left by the British is to blame. The judicial "caste" was considered separate from the rest of national life, a sort of *imperium in imperio*, and the common people, including even the Press, were scared of things connected with courts. Nobody regarded the judiciary as another democratic institution like the legislature and the Council of Ministers. In a sense, they are separate and do not throw themselves into the area of national controversies. Nonetheless, now they are an integral part of the State and have the same goals. However, the hang-over of the British past still haunts the mentality of the Indian judiciary, if I may say so pardonably, and even though there are many distinguished exceptions. Maybe, this accounts for the seeming sense of estrangement I referred to earlier.

Our procedural laws, and to a large extent our substantive laws, have a British heredity. The sacredness of private property and the *laissez faire* economics are reflected in those laws because the British Jurisprudence reflected British socio-economic life. The rules of statutory construction which we inherited from the British, presumes heavily against the taking away of vested rights and in favour of the subject against the State in marginal areas of the law—thanks to the Anglo-Saxon accent on the prevalence of individual right even against the requirements of the community. Above all, the binding quality of judicial precedents, which we have borrowed from the British, perpetuates the hold of old rulings of the British judges in India and in the Privy Council even on the current law and judicial administration. Those precedents potently express socio-economic values which we have deliberately discarded in our Constitution, and if we persist in following them the inevitable consequence will be that the pre-independence past will hold the judicial process prisoner and the inauguration of a freer, more dynamic, community-oriented approach may be inhibited.

Judicial Responsibility to Nation

Our professional cadres—I include the Bench and the bar—retain their old language, ethics and way of life, so that the forensic ethos is what it was decades ago. Naturally, no major mutation in the mentality of the judicial institution as a whole has been caused by the birth of the Sovereign Indian Republic, transfer of power to the people, and the new social goals of the State. And, small wonder, the expected degree of democratisation has not overtaken the Bench or the bar. The old exotic glamour of the judicature is fading off in the actinic light of

the present republican upsurge, but the new democratic lustre which the judiciary sheds even in socialist countries has yet to shine in India. In short, the judicial institution is struggling between the old world which is fast slipping under its feet and the new world on which it has not yet found its feet.

We need new cadres with new traditions, new ethics and a new language if the new revolutionary goals are to be reached. It is quite wrong to criticise the present performance of the judiciary when nothing has been done to change its orientation or structure. Unless we insist on a nationalist background and a change in social outlook in the personnel to be recruited, the mood of the judiciary may not change. Unless we lay down new canons of interpretation of statutes which will pay more heed to the purpose of the law as gathered from the parliamentary and public discussions of the bill than to the letter of the law, understood in the light of the old rules of statutory construction, judicial exposition of the new enactments cannot change. Unless we abolish the authority of old precedents, which were good in crystallizing bygone values, law will become a drag on the future. Unless we cast away our notation and vocabulary of the old Queen's justice and usher in the idea of popular justice in keeping with our Constitution, we cannot create that new judicial responsibility to the nation in regard to the observance of the rule of law by the citizens, the executive and the other institutions clothed with state power or entrusted with public resources.

If the social philosophy of our Constitution is to be implemented by the judiciary it is important that we must recruit only those who have an active faith in those ideas. Unfortunately, what is emphasised in the selection is some times the opposite. Lucrative practice as the only index of competence is insisted upon at present. While professional experience is desirable, a lucrative lawyer may develop a sneaky liking for an economic order which is other than socialist in the present Indian conditions. I have not known of selection of judges taking into consideration their social philosophy and background or public life, except to exclude them for suspected socialist leanings, if at all. Ordinarily, colourless and odourless persons, with successful practice or seniority in service alone to their credit, or communal merit or Party potency to their aid, are drawn into the judiciary, and some of them view the judge's post purely as a prestigious office. What we want is not to hire legal technicians on handsome remuneration or communal or Party favourites, but high-minded, public-spirited jurists with a positive social philosophy. Mr Justice Dhavan of the Allahabad High Court (as he then was) once stressed publicly that "a judge without prejudice is a judge without a mind", "there would be no progress without the right kind of prejudice".

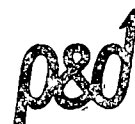
The subconscious sympathy, unwittingly developed by the upper-middle classes towards property rights, is undeniable, and the social philosophy buried deep below the mental surface of each judge settles his predilections and prejudices and the complex of instincts and emotions and habits and convictions which make the man. We must remember



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that judges are human and as Justice Cardozo has beautifully observed, "The great tides and currents which engulf the rest of men do not turn aside in their course and pass the judges by. We like to figure to ourselves the processes of justice as coldly objective and impersonal."

The pretence that the judges have no will of their own and that judicial power is exercised always and only for the purpose of giving effect to the will of the legislature or rather the will of the law has a lofty sound. But it is as imperfect and untrue as the opposite view expressed by critics: "One wills at the beginning the result, one finds the principle afterwards, such is the genesis of all juridical construction. Once accepted, the construction presents itself, doubtless, in the ensemble of legal doctrine, under the opposite aspect. The factors are inverted. The principle appears as an initial cause, from which one has drawn the result which is found deduced from it."

While such sweeping statements about or against the judges are half-truths only, the fact remains that the Indian Judiciary is drawn not from the working class or the toiling peasants but from the higher strata. It is not even respectable for a judge to hobnob with the common people. In this social milieu, the judge cannot be blamed from looking awry at revolutionary legislative measures which turn his socio-economic assumptions of the world upside down. Of course, he views things dispassionately. He remembers the oath of his office and applies the law objectively. Even so, when there are two views possible, instinctive preferences and inarticulate convictions unconsciously affect his conclusions.

Thus, the system in which the Indian judge works, the tradition by which he is governed, the ideal judge whom he models himself upon, and the socio-economic environs in which he lives, partly account for the view he takes when interpreting and applying the law and in working the machinery of justice. In justice to the judges we must remember these factors. Of course, much the same criticism applies to our Parliamentarians and their class interests and to the administrators at top levels. Be that as it may, the nature of the judicial process in India must be discussed more openly and incisively if we are to make this great institution effective in promoting the creation of the new social order.

Restraint and Imaginative Understanding

In this connection, I would emphasise each major institution having to realise the need for constitutional coexistence and comity if the administration is not to break down. There is a somewhat irresponsible tendency on the part of the politicians to put all the blame on the judiciary while the guilt may well be that of the legislator and the minister whose lack of vision and expertise and ignorance of the Constitution are unfortunate but frequent. When reading and hearing our politicking friends, how often have we enjoyed Bernard Shaw's gibe, "He knows nothing, and he thinks he knows everything. That points clearly to a political career."

I plead for a wise restraint and imaginative under-

standing on the part of all the three institutions so as to avoid frictions and clashes which will otherwise imperil our democratic functioning. The executive and the legislature must accept the authority of the judiciary in matters judicial, and the judiciary must avoid a show-down with the legislature by appreciating the great responsibility the latter is shouldering in lifting the country from its appalling poverty, material and cultural, and look at the deficiencies, if any, with sympathy and understanding. Similarly, the judiciary must desist from becoming a supervisory organ above the secretariat but should interfere only in clear cases of flagrant violations so that the smooth working of the administration may not be hampered. The impression has gone abroad, not without some basis, that the judiciary is all brakes and no accelerator.

Its true role is to be an activist guardian of the law watching over democratic legality among the people and the minions of the government and the numerous institutions in public life. The judge's duty does not end with deciding cases. He can use his experience to inform society about the trends which are harmful to the community as revealed in court. The judge can make sapient suggestions for improving legislation, the deficiencies of existing law being known to him better than to anybody else. The judge, again, may promote understanding among groups of people and lessen tension among conflicting sections by playing an impartial and imaginative role in deciding the disputes coming up before him.

The judiciary, manned by experienced and intelligent persons, may even take part in the legal education of the masses of the people, of the intelligentsia, of the administrators, and even of groups of working men—either by participating in seminars and symposia or by reading papers and giving lectures to gatherings of professionals and intellectuals or even going over the radio to broadcast its legal knowledge and judicial experience. The great advantage of the judges is that they are high above political storms and mud-slinging and do not have an axe to grind. Their word is likely to be listened to with great respect, their experience and knowledge being unquestionable. When a judge speaks officially he speaks in the name of the law, and his words carry a weight not derived from other positions in officialdom. This noble role is being played by judges in the Socialist countries. But our tradition, inherited from the British, is altogether alien to such a conception.

Broadly, a sense of accountability to the nation, not to any particular constituency or region, should possess the judiciary. Since the judiciary is part of the state, in a broad sense—and not apart from or above it—it has an obligation under Article 38 of the Constitution to strive, while enforcing and interpreting the laws, to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may, a social order in which justice—social, economic and political—shall inform all the institutions of the national life. I would plead for a new national tradition to be developed by the Indian judiciary, free from the monarchical phrases in which they are addressed and the exotic robes in which they are

attired. All this calls for a better judicial metabolism of the changed order.

It is heartening to notice how the new language is already creeping into the judgements of our courts how the positive aspect of the rule of law, namely, the creation and maintenance by the state of such social and economic conditions within a society as will ensure a reasonable standard of economic security, social welfare and education as also some sort of equal opportunity for masses of the people, is being accepted. Justice Bose once referred in his judgement to "the sovereign will of the people of India with no class, no caste, no race, no creed, no distinction, no reservation". Chief Justice Rajamannar, in one of his judgements, quoted with approval a passage from Huxley which it is refreshing to extract. "Many of our old ideas must be retranslated, so to speak, into a new language. The democratic idea of freedom, for instance, must lose its nineteenth century meaning of individual liberty in the economic sphere and become adjusted to the new conception of social duties and responsibilities. When a big employer talks about his democratic right to individual freedom, meaning thereby a claim to socially irresponsible control over a huge industrial concern and over the lives of tens of thousands of human beings whom it happens to employ, he is talking in a dying language."

Extreme elements snowballing all over the country have sworn to "down" the judiciary and parliamen-

tary institutions as bourgeoisbooby-traps. The vague politics of Indian humanity after Independence began with the expectation of a widespread betterment of the lot of the common man, but it soon dimmed into disbelief, darkened into despair and now has deepened into indifference to law. This crisis of faith in the major democratic institutions must be arrested by vitalising the rule of law with socio-economic substance. The judiciary has a great role to play in this grand plan of re-making Navabharatha especially when there is instability in the politics of the country and irresponsible elements in the social life of the community are raising their hoods, when moral values are failing all around us and integrity of character is becoming rarer in public life.

The judiciary can stand out as a stabilising force championing the dynamic Dharma of the Constitution. "Down with the judiciary" is shouted by those who also raise the cry "down with the Constitution" and "down with Parliament". No civilised nation, socialist or other wise, can survive as a democratic society without an independent judiciary, but the judicial system must be part of the stream of national life and stand for an orderly, progressive change in keeping with the urges and aspirations of the people. The only alternatives are, if we dare to think, either a positivist judicial system and a radical rule of law or lawless outbreaks steadily escalating into a general breakdown of order and eclipse of authority.

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Press : Prospects for Seventies

C.N. CHITTA RANJAN

TOWARDS the close of the sixties, the functioning of the Press in India came under public scrutiny in a big way, largely as a result of the conflict between the public interest which Parliament and the Government have been trying to project in however limited a manner, and the private interests which the biggest of Indian newspapers have necessarily to defend and protect by the very nature of their ownership and control.

While the Central Ministers and several parliamentarians began to see the correctness of the criticism vehemently voiced by the working journalists' movement over a period of two decades regarding the kind of ownership and control that was being allowed and encouraged to develop, the mouthpieces of the big business houses owning the biggest newspapers in the country set up a mighty howl about the freedom of the Press being in danger.

Effective Reorganization

Some of the latter even gave currency to the talk about impending "nationalization" of the Press in an attempt to frighten the Government away from the ideas for effective reorganization of the Press broadly outlined by the Press Commission in 1954. This canard was the direct result of the fear that the logic of events would inevitably lead to steps to end the stranglehold on the newspaper industry of a handful of financially powerful families, on the one hand, and help the emergence of a more or less democratic Press on the other.

The campaign about the

"freedom of the Press" was in content not very different from that about the sacredness of private property and the sacrosanct nature of the huge privy purses and privileges accorded to the former rulers of princely states over two decades ago.

Entrenched Interests

The common factor is the resistance of entrenched economic interests to any change in the *status quo* which will adversely affect the richest and most powerful but numerically entirely insignificant section in the country.

At the outset it is necessary to point out that the influence wielded by the Press in this country, especially the big business section of it, on the policy-makers and administrators at the Centre as well as in many of the States, is out of all proportion to the impact of newspapers on the people.

The very fact that in a country of over 550 million people, nearly thirty per cent of them literate, all the daily newspapers in all the languages command a total circulation of only around seven million brings out the utter inadequacy of the Indian Press as an instrument for disseminating news and views and reflecting public opinion in all its shades and hues.

Statistics apart, the fact is that the ownership and control of the biggest newspapers vest in the hands of the most powerful industrial houses in the country. Their chief, perhaps only, purpose is to protect and further their own interests as against those of the common people.

By virtue of controlling the

bulk of the national economy and the most important sections of the newspaper industry, the big business houses have been able to create the illusion that their own voice is the voice of the public, and have in any case been quite successful in browbeating and blackmailing the administration into submission to their wishes.

Ministers, Members of Parliament and State legislatures and the bureaucracy have all more or less allowed themselves to be subjected to such arms-twisting without pausing to consider where lies the importance attached to the newspapers serving as mouthpieces of big business.

It is not as if the question has come up before the public suddenly and without warning. It is not necessary here to go into the work of the Press Commission and the many recommendations it made almost 17 years ago. It is enough to point out that Parliament felt satisfied that the demand of the working journalists' organization for a thorough study of all aspects of functioning of the Indian Press was justified and set up the Commission.

Monopoly Trends

The Commission, made up largely of conservative elements, came to the conclusion on the strength of clear evidence that the developing trends of ownership and control of newspapers were leading towards undesirable monopoly and concentration.

Its recommendations regarding price-page schedule, ceiling on the space devoted to advertising, regulation of sales commission, diffusion of ownership, etc. were all aimed only at reducing the stranglehold of a few families on the Press and creating the right atmosphere for the growth of independent newspapers not subservient entirely to sectional interests.

The Press Commission did not go far enough, it is true, but it left little doubt that the state of the Press was truly deplorable and that the scope for free and fair competition and the growth of new newspapers was steadily diminishing as a result of the

invasion of the industry by the captains of industry and finance

In the years since 1954 the "trends" noticed by the Commission have steadily worsened and become threats to the free and independent functioning of the newspapers

One has only to go through the annual reports of the Registrar of Newspapers to realise how the newspapers owned and controlled by the biggest business houses in India have grown ever bigger, preventing the growth of small and medium newspapers in various ways, chiefly by cornering the bulk of the limited supplies of newsprint as well as advertisements which constitute the chief source of revenue of any newspaper.

Revealing Picture

The annual reports do gloss over much more than they reveal but even so the picture is broadly clear enough. For example, according to last year's report, newspapers under common ownership units, numbering ten, consumed 95,100 metric tons of newsprint out of the total supply of 1 84,000 metric tons in 1968-69.

Controlling a little less than half the total circulation of daily newspapers in the country, these ten units secure about 52 per cent of the available newsprint. In fact, two common ownership units—the Express empire and the Bennett Coleman network—consumed a little under 42,000 metric tons, representing about 22.6 per cent of the total newsprint available for all newspapers in the whole country.

These two common ownership units together produce 22 dailies out of the total of 636 dailies in the country, in other words, 3.4 per cent of all newspapers in the country corner over 22 per cent of available newsprint. Taking all the newspapers that represent the same type of owning interests, it is found that the situation is no better.

It has been argued by some that the growth of these newspapers in the last two decades has been due to some mysterious competence in their management. This is simply not true. The fact

is that the industrial houses which need these newspapers to project themselves and their allies in the financial and political fields, were able in the initial stages to pump in vast resources, making it impossible for the smaller papers with little resources outside the newspaper industry to compete with them.

Advertisement Squeeze

It does not require much intelligence to see that by virtue of their control over a large number of industries in different parts of the country, the business houses concerned are in a position to corner the bulk of the available advertisements in the private sector and to apply pressure against the flow of advertisements to newspapers that do not conform.

Cases are not unknown of advertisements having been refused or even of contracts having been cancelled to smaller independent newspapers which showed themselves capable of resisting pressures to change their policies to suit the requirements of big business. Cases are not wanting either of editors being squeezed out or made to swallow their pride as a result of such pressure through the medium of advertising.

Since the struggle for survival in the newspaper industry is quite tough, it is hardly surprising that a large number of small and medium newspapers have chosen to conform to big business requirements rather than give up their just adequate revenue from advertisements.

These are not the only ways in which the big business houses operating within the newspaper industry stifle opposition to their private interests. One big newspaper in the knowledge of this writer sold at less than marked price and paid princely sales commissions which bore no relation to the sale price merely in order to snuff out a competitor in one of the South Indian languages. This is obviously no isolated phenomenon.

Also, the big business newspapers have the capacity to give more pages than the price warrants, so as to attract the house-

holder who, with his limited means has also to keep in mind the added value of the paper he buys.

Thus, it will be seen that in every way the pattern of ownership and control in the newspaper industry in India has worked against fair competition and has stood in the way of the growth of small and medium newspapers and the coming into being of new newspapers.

There is no need to go into the other aspect of professional talent being enticed away from the small and medium newspapers by the offer of fantastic salaries and perquisites. If a number of top journalists are today unable to retain their integrity and have virtually placed comfortable living above their conscience, it is essentially because human nature is not to suffer and make sacrifices for principles when it is immediately more rewarding to do as one is told.

The system is such that the servile and the subservient come to the top in the profession while the ones who value their independence, must necessarily go under. That only a few muster the courage to belong to the latter category is hardly surprising.

Same Viewpoint

It must be mentioned here that not only the Press Commission but even bodies like the Monopolies Inquiry Commission have found that big business newspapers have tended to present a rosy picture of the owning interests and have invariably projected the interests of the sharks in the private sector as being identical with the national interest.

Every careful reader of newspapers knows that on all matters affecting their common interests, the industrialists owning newspapers see to it that all those sections of the Press over which they have direct or indirect control, project more or less the same viewpoint.

This is, of course, not true only of the big business newspapers and their satellites; there are also big regional newspapers owned or controlled by vested

interests which sell their own line and resist changes which will affect them adversely

This then is the situation, and it surely cannot be said to be satisfactory from the point of view of the common people of this country. Whenever the poor majority in any area agitates for its legitimate rights in a democracy, all these newspapers have a way of ganging up to create the impression that it is insurrection organized by communists. Suppression of the truth and distortion of facts are their stock in trade

Regimented Quantity

If the working journalists have been agitating against this state affairs and demanding changes in the structure of the newspaper industry, it is because of the awareness that the Press in India is slowly being turned into a regimented quantity harmful to the interests of the people in the short as well as long run.

It is only belatedly that members of Parliament and those in power have woken up to the seriousness of the situation, and yet, even now, there is considerable fear and hesitation over taking steps to bring about essential changes which can ensure the development of a healthy, democratic Press which by and large will place the interests of the people as a whole above sectional interests

No journalist worth his salt will countenance any kind of interference by the Government with the freedom of the Press. That is why the slogan of "press freedom in peril" has been raised by the interested ones to cloud the real issues at stake. What the working journalists demand is not administrative interference with the working of newspapers but the creation of an atmosphere in which editors and other working journalists can function as free agents keeping the public interest in view and not amenable to pressures from outside

Once this is borne in mind, the moves that have been made towards the close of the sixties and which may bear fruit in the new decade become understand-

able. The very first question that has to be tackled is the removal of the hold of other industries over the newspaper industry. What difference this can make to the working of a newspaper has been brought out in the case of Bennett Coleman & Co. owning the *Times of India* and allied publications

For various reasons which are now known to the public a new Board of Directors has been constituted under orders from a court. The direct result has been that the journalists in the establishment are not obliged to carry out orders from persons outside the newspaper. It is no accident that among the big business newspapers the *Times of India* at the moment is a little more objective than the rest

Many of the journalists concerned have confessed that it is a relief not to have representatives of the owners breathing down their necks. The case of the Bennett Coleman is peculiar, but it provides an illustration of the beneficial effect of removing the control of the owning interests

Legitimate Demand

This is the significance of the Press Commission's recommendation for the diffusion of ownership of newspapers. This recommendation has to be viewed alongside Jawaharlal Nehru's warning to the profession, a little before his death, against the dangers inherent in the ownership and control of newspapers passing into the hands of industries outside the newspaper industry.

The newspaper employees demand that they should become shareholders of the newspapers in which they work or that trusts should be formed in which the employees themselves will have a big say is, thus, legitimate. Not all trusts are desirable, hence the need to work out a form which will ensure that the employees themselves through their chosen representatives control the financial affairs of their newspapers and that the working journalists evolve policies of their papers without pressure or outside dictation

The formation of trusts on the basis of the employees controlling

the majority shares, with adequate built-in safeguards to prevent interference, with the collective functioning of the working journalists, appears to be the only sensible solution.

But then it will not be easy to bring this about, for newspapers to their present owners are "property" and their battle to retain their hold becomes part of the campaign to prevent the removal of the right to property from the Fundamental Rights chapter of the Constitution.

Property Rights

The same is true of the news agencies, which are at present subservient to the newspaper-owning interests. If the Press Commission suggested the conversion of the Press Trust of India into a public corporation with an effective voice for the employees, it was because it realised that the agency had been converted into another instrument for the protection of the very interests that had invaded the newspaper industry in a big way

Here, again, it is the big business houses utilising the existence of their own newspaper empires that lay down the law in regard to collection and dissemination of news and views. This is equally true of the other major English news agency.

The language agencies stand on a slightly different footing, but recent developments, like the elimination of senior journalists from one of them, have shown that they too stand as much in need of reorganization. The concept of shares being "property" stands in the way of anything being done about them

Thus, it looks as if there is no alternative to amending the Constitution to prepare the ground for these basic changes in the structure of newspapers and news agencies which alone can guarantee the establishment and growth of a genuinely free and independent Press in the country. This Parliament and the Government should immediately pay serious attention to.

Meanwhile, the Government

(Continued on page 71)

HAPPY IN HIS IGNORANCE, THE CRICKET FANATIC DOES NOT KNOW HE IS INFATUATED WITH A ...

Vestige of Colonialism

G. N. ACHARYA

THE situation is peaceful", said the 1-30 PM broadcast of the All India Radio on Tuesday, December 16, 1969. The news reader had just announced that six persons had been killed, trampled to death in a mad rush of 20,000 cricket fans in front of the ticket counters at the Eden Gardens.

With our emotions coarsened by the daily dosage of disaster news, we have become impervious to death. Death has almost become a non-event. Yet, what did the writer of that little sentence, engaged in his routine play of words mean, I wondered.

"The situation is peaceful" It would be. With six bodies stretched on cold slabs in the morgue. Six men, young, noisy, expectant—six out of a strange, incredible ghost army of 20,000 men, who had emerged out of the grey, misery-filled streets of overcrowded Calcutta, to stand in queues all night, willing to pay six rupees each, to sit haunched on crowded, uncomfortable benches, to watch a slow, tedious ball game. Six men among millions of doped minds. Six men with fake values, but still six men alive.

Peaceful Situation

Now they were dead—no joy, no misery, no excitement, no tedium, no mind. The situation was peaceful. It had to be. Or did the news writer, with a faint flicker somewhere at the back of his mind, imply that there had been no riots elsewhere? No reprisals? Nobody had set fire to trams of which, judging by the numbers reported burned so often, Calcutta seems to have an inexhaustible supply? Telangana was its only rival in this field.

There, it was an inexhaustible supply of buses to burn.

I recalled a talk with a visiting Bengalee businessman some years ago. After successfully negotiating Bombay's traffic he was bragging that it was nothing compared to Calcutta's confusion. After listening to his vivid description, someone naively asked him, "But don't people die?" The Bengalee businessman in who was showing off his knowledge of Hindi, said: "Haahn Martay To Hain. Aur Bohut Hain." Human life is the cheapest of all in Calcutta.

Mindless Cliche

Yet, my mind was disturbed by the hideous ugliness of the Eden Garden's tragedy. Six men choked to death by other men like themselves with no animus against them. I was disturbed, too, by that routine, mindless cliche: the situation is peaceful.

Vaguely troubled, I looked out of my window. And there was my friend, The Cricket Fan, trudging along, pushing his round tummy in front of him, with a beatific smile on his round face, and a transistor cocked to his ear.

He has a radio, of course. So have all my neighbours North and South, East and West, and at two levels above me. But none like C.F. When for some reason or other, may be, because his nagging wife asks him to buy bread, salt or potatoes, he takes a transistor along for uninterrupted pleasure.

Cricket is his consuming interest. Nothing else exists for him. He lives from Test to Test, with occasional, unsatisfactory nibblings, at other matches in between the main meals. When the commentaries are on, his radio

blares at its loudest, destroying my peace, subverting my sleep, disorganising my work. But he does not care. Cricket is his life, his joy, his everything.

When the commentary comes crackling through, he explains, he plays his radio the loudest for two reasons. First, it makes him share the thrill, the excitement, gives him a feeling of being an onlooker. Secondly, it is a public service. It enables people passing along the street to hear the commentary and know the score.

Vacuum Filler

The Cricket Fanatic anywhere in this land is a witless imbecile, with a vacant top, too ignorant to know how ignorant he is, and totally lacking in any ideas of what to do with his time. He has come to the city in search of a higher standard of living. Some success has come to him, but it has taken its toll. It has left him a vacuum of disinheritance. Cricket is one of the pathetic vacuum fillers.

Living in a convulsive society, one falling apart at the seams, he sticks to Cricket, as to his devotional usage, by sheer habit. His ability to cope with reality is debilitated by the claims of fantasy. He does not understand this fantasy for what it is. No one caught in the toils of fantasy ever does.

In this case, it is made particularly difficult because the publicity blarney from the mass media, like the Cricket Fanatic, are themselves caught in the fantasy, though some may be moved only by cynical commercialism. Even they, however, rarely grasp that Cricket is one of the useless relics of our colonial past which we are wholly unwilling to shed.

For the British, Cricket is their national game. Why and how it came to occupy that position is a puzzle, an enigma, a deep mystery. The British like to project themselves as somewhat simple-minded folks, lacking even the Continental European's subtlety, let alone the depth and contortions of the inscrutable oriental mind. Yet, they can get into

hysterical ecstasies about any aspect of cricket

Typical is this passage from the article "The Test" by Alan Ross: "The fast bowler's art is among the most beautiful expressions of the human body, energy, stamina, control, combined in vivid fluency of movement. He is a man of sweat and determination and of necessary hatred in action off the field a lover of beer, of horses, of women, of sleep

"There are other arts of flight, of spin, of length as naggingly repetitive as the water-torture. But the great fast bowler's is the final apotheosis, the embodiment of a devilish joy that is at once physical and spiritual, retributive and musical. A rite, ritual of Chinese inscrutability and subtlety, to which no calligrapher has done justice, an art-form, a balletic background to gossip and drinking, a rural antic, a social event, a conflict reflective of national prestige, a resumé of English taste, habits, masochisms, a canalisation of erotic impulses, a species of warfare, the instinctual man's introduction to aesthetics, an aspect of history—you can go on phrase-making till the cows come home, and everything will true" *The Boundary Book*, pp. 24-25)

Wasteful Misuse

I am not sure if Ross was not putting in a bit of tongue-in-the-cheek fast bowling. If not, what a wonderful, brilliant, extravagant, wasteful misuse of a hell of a lot of good English words! Other English writers have written in less rhapsodic terms

Bernard Shaw's description of the game as "the slowest and stupidest", is too well known. So is Kipling's reference to the "flannelled fools at the wicket". A C Macdonnel has provided an amusing description of "A Village Cricket Match" with the "interminable period in which no wicket fell and no run was scored"

E Clitherhew Bentley, the originator of the species of verse named after him, devoted several of his clitherhews to Cricket. The best known of them concerns the

redoubtable, bearded player, Grace.

Dr W G Grace

Had hair all over his face

*Lord! how the people cheered
When a ball got lost in his beard!*

Only the tallest of living humourists has chosen to immortalise golf rather than Cricket

The British, with their flair for cunning which seems innocence—often they themselves naively believe in their own innocence—made Cricket too an instrument of imperial policy. They claimed that they won their wars on the playing fields of the greatest of their snob schools, Eton. Cricket became a part of the educational system by which they manufactured Brown Britishers, along the lines so frankly expounded by Macaulay

Competitive Concept

That system has run the gauntlet of many committees and commissions in recent years. It has withstood the assaults of reformers and revolutionaries. The mystique of education and advancement, the mystique of academic standards and professions, have been challenged, but not overthrown. The system—empty as it may be of vitality and authenticity—survives. With it there endures the competitive concept of sports, with Cricket enthroned as the centre-piece of all sports activity, academic or otherwise

India, in its confrontation with the British, was facing a victor, more advanced in material civilization. That victory was easily attributed to total superiority. Cultural imitation seemed both inevitable and desirable. The social mood of the conquered fitted the political policy of the conqueror

So we took over many things British, in an uncritical, imitative, outburst. Fashions in clothes, of which the tie was the most distinctive, modes and manners of which smoking was the most obnoxious (drinking we already had), and sports, particularly the British National game, Cricket, was taken over along with laws, political ideas and institutions, literary tastes and a thousand

other things

Much of the muddled mess survives, with little attempt at judicious selection or harmonious synthesis. This continued imitativeness is the result of creative sterility, incapacity for innovation, fear of everything new, unthinking inertia, and the vested interests that have been built around many of the modes, manners, customs and institutions

When cultural imitation went far enough to create fears of assimilation and loss of identity, a spirit of nationalist rebellion arose. But it was merged with and got lost in the political urge for freedom. Sports in general, and Cricket in particular, was one of the effective modes of undermining dangerous zeal and loyalties. In the twenties and thirties, British educators worked assiduously to foster a love of Cricket as part of their attempt at creating stable and safe associations and loyalties

They succeeded only too well. While the accidents of history brought us political freedom, it still left us without a meaningful system of national priorities or a coherent scale of national values. In this muddlement, Cricket has acquired a disproportionate importance in the minds of the urban westernised, middle and upper class men, and sometimes even women

It is as a part of this process that the newspapers have given and continue to give Cricket the pride of place in their sports coverage. The radio has followed. As a state-owned enterprise, it should have resisted the temptation to succumb to the lure of this synthetic popularity. The social consequences have been disastrous

The ubiquity of the transistor is never more in evidence than when Test matches are played. It can be nothing but a craze for people to hear Test commentaries while watching hockey matches, as it happened at the time of the International Hockey tournament at Ahmedabad some years ago

At the recent Second Test with Australia at the Bombay Brabourne Stadium it was found that even the people who attend the match and can watch the game in person, listen to the commentary,

rather than use their own eyes

At the last Congress session at the Bombay Azad Maidan, I was intrigued to find delegates and visitors, who had walked out of the pandal, standing still in the sun, like storks standing in shallow water waiting patiently and hopefully for the next delectable morsel, with transistors cocked to their ears

Lost Man-Hours

The running commentaries, insipid and repetitive as they are, have disrupted public and private life. Knots of people gathered around shops and restaurants to listen to the indistinct noises. Nobody has tried to calculate the man-hours of work lost in offices where transistors are brought in, and the staff neglects its work to cluster around to listen to the commentary. This is a grand opportunity not only for those who may be genuinely interested in Cricket, but others who are just sluggards.

Link the social cost of Cricket, its economics too has not received adequate attention. The guarantee system came into operation with the first post-war MCC team to visit India in 1951-52. Nigel Howard's side were given a guarantee of Rs 10,000 per test. The rates have skyrocketed since.

The Government of India sanctioned foreign exchange equivalent to 1,03,500 Australian dollars for the latest visitation of the Aussies. This amount was paid in advance to the Australian Board by the Indian Board of Cricket Control, for five tests and five other matches. The guarantee money was worked out on the basis of 16,700 Australian dollars per Test and 4,000 dollars for non-Test matches.

In addition, all expenses of the Australian team in India, including air travel, boarding and lodging in style throughout their stay, was met by the Indian Board. Of course, the expenses and honoraria of our own players, umpires, and observers have to be met by the Board.

The Cricket Board, in its turn, demanded and obtained guarantee money of Rs 2,75,000 from each

Test Centre and Rs 500,00 from each non-Test Centre. There are arrangements for sharing excess profits. Besides guarantee money and its own organisational and administrative costs, each centre seeks to make its match an occasion for raking in as much profit as possible. Hence the fight for assignment of matches.

The money paid by the AIR as royalties, its expenses on its reporters and experts teams, and the costs to newspapers must be added to get some idea of the finances involved. Economists and sociologists have not yet thought of Cricket as a worthwhile subject of investigation. Nor have the psychologists.

By any sane reckoning, Cricket should have suffered from psychological obsolescence. But one look at cricketers is enough to prove that there is no imminent danger of such a development. They strut around like conquerors, as if they were conferring a favour on Mother Earth by simply stepping on her.

The only folks who can rival the cricketers in sheer swank are the "Pillum tars". As for these, anywhere in the world, they walk on air, like those new fangled hovercraft.

Only Seven

People in Delhi may not notice such phenomenon, because, I am told, it is common there for lots of others, including bureaucrats, diplomats and journalists to tread on air cushions, the height from the earth depending on the self-importance assumed.

Cricket is not an international game. It has no Olympic status. Too few countries play it. Great Britain, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, West Indies, India and Pakistan are the only seven of Test status.

It is a wonder that anything so exclusively Anglo-Saxon is tolerated by the blue-blooded Afrikaners. Probably its turn is coming. In fact, it is dying out, slowly but apparently inexorably, even in its country of origin. Australia, West Indies and India may be its last homes.

Here, however, we have transformed it. The nature of that

transformation was presented in an elegant understatement by N.S. Ramswami, one of the Cricket reporters of the *Indian Express*. In a dispatch dated "Madras, December 26", he wrote, "the test is a mixture of spectacle, picnic, and contest of cricket skill. It is necessary to stress this point if one is to understand cricket crowds in India."

"In other countries people probably regard Test cricket purely as a contest of skill. In India Test matches are often social occasions as well."

Cultural Enslavement

Call me an unfashionable dowdy, a crusty ancient, a fossil, and an old stik-in-the-mud, a kill-joy, call me a Bolshie if you must. I stand up to that and declare a conviction which has been steadily deepening for the last 37 years that the necktie, the smoking habit and Cricket mania are the symbols of our continuing cultural enslavement.

Of these, Cricket is the most pernicious, because it is the one slavery of which we are proud, which we hug, relish, enjoy and will not give up. We are thrilled, excited and consumed by an insane ecstasy. Such were the thoughts that briefly passed through my mind as I looked out of my window on that December afternoon.

There was my friend, the Cricket Fanatic, strutting along, pushing his paunch ahead of him, with a beatific and satisfied smirk hitched on his round face. There, as the radio had just said, were those six ghastly bodies lying on cold slabs in a Calcutta morgue. The situation was peaceful.

KINDLY NOTE

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Socialism in Seventies

V.B. SINGH

BY the end of seventies, India's population will be 700 million. With increasing pressure on land, slow industrialisation and a rate of growth not exceeding five per cent per annum there is no way out of poverty, ignorance and disease except socialism.

Theoretically, the commitment of Indian political parties to socialism is increasing, but Indian economy is nowhere near this professed goal. Even the implementation of the so-called 10-point programme of the Congress will at best be an attack on concentration of economic power in the private sector.

Property Relations

This is necessary, but this cannot be equated with socialism which implies common ownership of the means of production and their fullest utilisation. There seems to be no realisation that without a change in the property relations, socialism cannot be brought about.

A growing public sector in industry cannot be compatible with a growing private sector in agriculture. The strategy for the socialist transformation in India demands an increasingly democratised and efficient public sector in industry as well as in agriculture.

In industry, nationalisation of strategic privately owned industries and opening of more and more undertakings in the public sector will take us to this goal. In the agricultural sector, cooperativisation and extension of state farms will bring about the desired change in the property relations.

The radicals demand that

nationalised banks should give credit to the landless without any security. The landless labourers are also supposed to get small strips of land. It is assumed that bank credit will help them to purchase bullocks, ploughs, seeds, fertilizers, etc., so that they may become efficient small producers. In other words, the agricultural proletariat and semi-proletariat are being helped to become small owners of private property—*petty bourgeoisie*. By no stretch of imagination is this a step towards socialism.

Under market economy, small producers will in time be squeezed out and alienated from the means of production. This has happened not only in Europe and America, but also in India. Even those who have been given land under the *Bhoodan* movement, with the stipulation that they cannot sell or mortgage their holdings, are being compelled by the market forces to transfer their land to the rich.

Cooperative Basis

They cannot legally sell their plots, but so long as the rural rich, backed by the traditional powers, has a *de facto* possession of land, a level title does not interest him. Any number of such instances can be found where land has been redistributed on individual basis under the *Bhoodan* movement.

This has a lesson for the future policy of land redistribution. Unless the surplus land is redistributed on a cooperative basis, it cannot be retained by the small producers. The redistribution of land on cooperative basis will help the landless better

and will be a beginning of common ownership of land, which will be a right step in the direction of laying the foundation of a socialist economy.

The "New Agricultural Strategy" is helping the kulak. The supply of agricultural inputs—seeds, fertilizer, irrigation facilities, improved tools, and agricultural machinery—are flowing to the owners of large holding. This is helping them to become richer than before. It is the children of this stratum of agricultural population who are also enjoying better educational opportunities, since these are determined by economic opportunities.

Here it is to be noted that the cultivators of large holdings come from the "upper" castes, and small cultivators and landless from the "lower" castes. In the wake of increasing kulakisation of agriculture, the economic and social disparities are being widened, instead of being narrowed down.

Kulakisation of the economy is the greatest obstacle to the development of socialism, on the economic as well as the political levels. This can be curbed only by organising the landless, small and the middle peasants in co-operatives.

Cooperativisation of agriculture guarantees not merely the economies of scale but also the supply of essential agricultural inputs to the small producers. Here it may be pointed out that input other than agricultural machinery can be used on any size of farm, but the use of agricultural machinery is increasingly becoming important in view of the rising cost of labour as well as the maintenance of bullocks, and the urgency of getting land released from the production of fodder to food.

Until agricultural cooperatives embracing small cultivators do not spread, the state should help them in hiring agricultural machinery through the Machine Tractor Station (MTS). It is also to be realised that in a vast country like India, agricultural machinery will continue to be scarce, specially because we have not, so far, planned their internal supply.

So for better utilisation

of the scare agricultural fixed capital, MTS will be the most appropriate agency. With the extension of Government roadways, district and divisional workshops, the establishment of MTS will be facilitated.

The public sector in industry and commerce has grown, and shall continue to grow in the seventies through the nationalisation of strategic private sector units and the establishment of new undertakings. But its impact on the economy and the image on the people has not been as favourable as was expected.

Unfavourable Image

Even if we discount the massive propaganda organised by privately owned Press, the fact remains that some key undertakings in the public sector have not been fully utilised and they are running at a loss. The strategy of investment in heavy industries followed in the Second and the Third Five Year Plans, required more investments, which when slowed down, created all sorts of difficulties for the economy.

The management of public undertakings cannot be left to retired politicians and rejected bureaucrats. Professional management with a sense of commitment to socialism, has to be created. The base of recruiting the management staff should be extended so as to include competent trade union functionaries as well.

Worker's participation in management will not only democratise the management but will lead to the rise in labour productivity and result in higher production. Each plant should be helped to have its own plans, and the management and the trade unions should annually sign collective agreements to fulfil the production targets and extend benefits to workers in various forms.

The concept of mixed economy is neither to be treated as something confined to industry, nor as a permanent feature of our economy. It is a transient phase to facilitate the building up of socialism both in industry and agriculture. It is a healthy sign that some thinking has already started on these lines.

But what is urgently needed is a programme for socialist transition. In industry it implies the cataloguing of the essential industries (like coal-mining, tea, coffee, jute, cotton and pharmaceuticals) for nationalisation so that they may be modernised and geared to the needs of expanding domestic consumption as well as exports.

The pharmaceutical industry should come in the public sector because in a poor country, medicine must be supplied cheap to the people, and this cannot be done as long as it continues to be in the private sector. In addition, construction of new undertakings in the public sector should be expanded so as to include consumer goods as well.

The functioning of public sector, at this stage of our development, cannot be confined to investment in industries which have a long gestation period, and do not yield high profits. In agriculture, a vigorous programme of cooperativisation and extension of profitable state farms will bring to this sector the advantages of industrialisation—rendering it self-sufficient and prosperous.

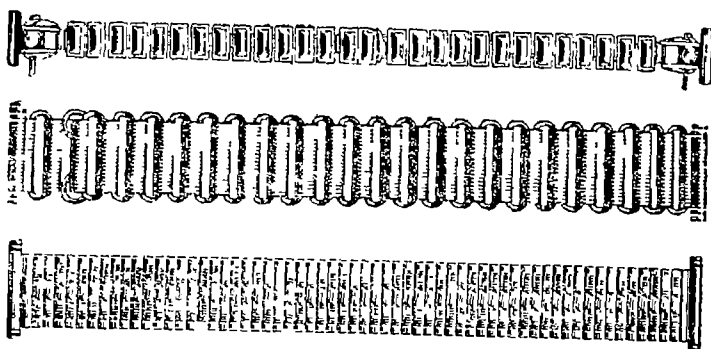
In the *Mainstream* Annual Number of 1967, I had outlined the "Politics of Indian Economic Development". The happenings

since then have supported this analysis. The current debate pertaining to political polarisation is confined to the newspapers and the party functionaries. It must be taken to the masses through their organisations—the trade unions and the kisan sabhas.

The parties of Indian socialism have yet not realised that the crux of class struggle is the struggle between the owners of private property, on the one hand, and the wage earners and self-employed, on the other, for securing an increasing share in the national income, and ultimately extend public ownership over all the means of production.

This cannot be done without the cooperation of trade unions and the kisan sabhas. These organisations have been run by social and political cadres mainly drawn from the Left parties.

It will not be too much to suggest that in the next elections tickets should be given by the parties professing socialism only to those functionaries who have fulfilled a specified quota in terms of their work in the building of socialism. Parliament will be reduced to a debating club unless there is a vigilant and conscious mass pressure to convert it into an instrument of building socialism.



"Bentex"

STRAPS • BRACELETS

Decade of Paradox

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

STOCK-TAKING for the decade that has just ended merely adds up to the confusing pattern of the State's polity, its economy and industry. It has throughout been a decade of paradoxes, contradictions, high expectations and shattered hopes.

The seeming big change concerns the ouster of the Congress from power. The absolute power enjoyed by the Congress during the earlier two decades was diagnosed as the root cause of all of Tamil Nadu's ills, both real and imaginary. Its ouster was logically deemed as the cure-all.

Explosive Issues

The task was set and, not without great efforts, accomplished. The doubt that remains is whether the cure after all has not been worse than the disease.

The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), which has found itself in the seat of power but without any ideological commitment either to the Right of the Left, has meant certainly no improvement on the much discredited Congress Government. If anything, many believe its fierce adherence to *status quoism* actually amounts to a big setback, certainly no big change for the better.

It was inconceivable during the fifties that the DMK would grow to its present stature, of becoming a party big enough to replace the Congress monopoly of power in the State. The DMK itself never had such an ambitious goal set before it. With its planks rooted in the twin emotionally explosive issues of linguistic and regional chauvinism, it never had anything like a serious ambition of coming to power in

a unit of a national federal polity.

It was well known that many DMK leaders themselves did not believe in what all they said. They talked about their uncompromising goal of Dravidastan cut away from India and the great Anna playing the role of Jinnah in bringing about a further division of India already divided.

The Congress, grown smug and complacent in power, was actually happy over the DMK's militant chauvinistic posture. If ever the DMK became a serious threat to its ruling honours it thought it could have a way out by outlawing the DMK as a secessionist movement impermissible even in a fundamental democracy. The Congress only lived to see its hope rudely shattered.

Correctly judging the people's anti-Congress mood, the DMK decided to shed its secessionist colour just as though it made no difference to the rational of its very inception.

Major Decision

When the Constitutional amendment banning forces of disintegration was on the anvil in 1964, DMK supreme Annadurai issued a press statement disowning the Dravida Nadu objective, clarifying the DMK's "Dravidastani" objective as nothing more serious than an innocuous striving for greater understanding as among the ethnic and cultural groupings with common Southern heritage.

This single major decision, quietly announced without even the pretext of a discussion even in the DMK hierarchy, went unnoticed but worked miracles. The DMK suddenly became the

Big Brother rallying point of all anti-Congress parties and groups which had earlier looked down on the DMK only because of its divisive role.

From the Swatantra on the Right and the Communist party and the Marxists on the Left extreme, the political conglomerate suddenly became an effective amalgam of a serious anti-Congress front. The front, with its convenient logic of each unto itself and all against the Congress, brought out the basic weakness of the Congress, namely, its strength having been nothing more than the divided weakness of the conglomerate ranged against it.

Linguistic Chauvinism

It was, in fact, no surprise that the non-splitting of the Opposition votes became the last nail on the Congress coffin. If what happened on the eve of the fourth General Elections had taken place on the eve of the first General Elections, as early as in 1952, the result would not have been much different.

Linguistic chauvinism still remains a major DMK plank. In fact, it is so in an added measure because, for compelling reasons, the DMK just cannot revive its separatist plank except at the risk of losing power. With no apparent commitment to deep changes in the State's socio-economic structure, the DMK seems to have arrived at the ultimate goal of its political movement, namely, wielding power for its own sake without disturbing the establishment.

In so far as its linguistic chauvinism, summed up in the slogan of "English ever, Hindi never," helps it to present the Congress as something isolated from the dominant political current in the State as a fully stymied pro-Hindi party, the DMK has set its sights of consolidation by sticking to the slogan. Only from this point of view the DMK banned teaching of Hindi in Tamil Nadu schools as one of its very first acts in earnest of its anti-Hindi *bona fides*.

It is a fortunate coincidence for the DMK that the Congress,

the only opposition in the conventional sense, is now split beyond repair. In its political scheme, the DMK reckons only with the Syndicate Congress under the control of its national strong man, Sri K. Kamaraj.

Flowing from its line of nominally conditional support to Smt Indira Gandhi at the Centre, the DMK even banks on the possibility of some kind of an understanding, as usual to its own advantage, with the New Congress.

This may lead to its encountering some difficulties *vis-a-vis* its pro-Syndicate Swatantra ally and the newly critical CPI(M), both for varying reasons. But the DMK's basic political line is one of getting the maximum out of the tactical line of uniting against the Congress.

Basic Line

It does not bother about the sudden collapse of anti-Congressism as the logical creed of "anti-fronts". It bothers only about a positive front in defence of its ruling position, thus leading to a paradox of the Congress, even in its hour of defeat and gloom, providing the motif of political alignments.

The DMK regime is outwardly a picture of stability though not of the much promised radical change. But, the very nature of a political grouping having no better ambition than to be an alternative to the Congress as rulers of the State, makes it inevitable that there should be an internal clash of highly ambitious personalities.

Annadurai's death early last year virtually left the DMK rudderless. His was a great personality, always capable of adjustments and compromises. There was actually a leadership contest in the party with rivals claiming deeper loyalties to the Anna legacy. Ultimately the claim was settled in favour of Sri M. Karunanidhi who became both Chief Minister and the party's new President—the post was created only to accommodate his claim of being the number one in the hierarchy.

Still a number of factions led

by the late Anna's close chelas like Sri V. R. Nedunchezhiyan, now Education Minister and the party's General Secretary, Sri K. Ambazhagan, the leader of the DMK Parliamentary Group, and K. A. Mathiazhagan, the Finance Minister; are far from reconciled to Sri Karunanidhi's preeminence in the party.

In the power struggle which is a continuous process, Sri Karunanidhi does not want to go by default. He, too, has a sizable group in the party owing personal allegiance to him, buttressed by the financial power of a new recruit to the DMK cult, press baron Si. Pa. Adityanar of the *Thanthi* chain.

The Congress might have bred contempt for itself because of a long innings of power. But, in retrospect, the conclusion is inevitable that it did the maximum to place the State's economy on a reasonably sound pedestal.

It farmed out industrial licenses to a limited number of entrepreneurs but it also saw to it that at least one factory a day came into existence during the Third Plan period. It carried electricity to the rural areas on a planned basis both for domestic consumption and modernising agriculture. It opened more than 32,000 primary schools to boost literacy to a record 84 per cent.

Democratic Decentralisation

It did bungle in respect of managing a marginal surplus on the food front, but it did not allow any section to go without the minimum requirements on a regulated basis. Its policy of democratic decentralisation, reflected in community development schemes, gave a big face-lift to the villages.

The failure of the Third Plan at the national level did not have any relevance to the performance of the Congress Government in Madras, renamed Tamil Nadu after the advent of the DMK regime—this being its professed single major achievement in the 34 months in power. Actually, so far as the outlay part was concerned the Third Plan was more than fulfilled with an investment of over Rs 280 crores in the State

sector schemes.

The DMK came to power at a time when the Fourth Plan was a non-starter. The demagogic assertion, however, is inspiring even as it is of no practical avail. The brave words of Finance Minister Mathiazhagan disclosed the point that "this Government of Tamil Nadu emphatically dissociates itself from a conservative approach and proclaims itself in favour of a big, bold and imaginative plan for the country and the State."

Lower Key

But the Tamil Nadu Government's Plan frame is pitched to a lower key of visualising a total investment of only Rs 575 crores. But then, the Plan frame means nothing when the country is still debating the larger issue of the term "planning", and virtually practising for the last two years *ad hoc* spending on alleged schemes of developments.

It is a fact that during the last thirteen months no new industry has come up in the State, although the DMK Government has offered favourable terms of support to private investors. Perhaps the industrial climate remains much the same elsewhere too and the DMK in the State cannot be blamed for what is becoming a larger national pattern.

More than fifty textile units have closed down rendering jobless nearly a lakh of workers. Annadurai had hit the headlines in the national Press by his pledge to restart all the closed mills before the end of 1968 and promise to unemployed workers financial help from the State until the reopening of the mills. His pledge still remains unredempted.

The State has, however, made a beginning with the setting up of a textile corporation with dominant share participation of the Centre to take over management of closed but potentially viable textile mills.

The DMK can consider itself extremely lucky in one respect. The monsoon, almost regularly failed to come to the rescue of the previous Congress Government creating pockets of food

scarcity, and consequent mass irritation towards it. This year the monsoon was both early and bountiful

The food production is expected to touch an all-time high of 66 lakh tonnes this year. Reacting to the mood and incidentally forgetting its Left orientation that should favour state trading in foodgrains, the DMK scrapped all controls on foodgrains. The revival of the open market in rice means the end of the DMK's catchy pre-election slogan of "rupee-a-measure of rice" to all people soon after it came to power.

Of course, it is being made out that the modified scheme is still in force with its "socialistic" application to people in the low-income group, but it is difficult to assess the socialistic benefits accruing to the have-nots who are not yet adequately defined and categorised. At any rate, it is clear that the scheme has been given up for good in the State as a whole, barring a small section

in Madras City and Coimbatore town.

Surely this was not Annadurai's concept of the scheme as he had spelt it out in his pre-election speeches. Annadurai had even enjoined on the people to throw the DMK out of power if it failed to assure to all of them not one measure of rice per rupee but three measures per rupee in the third year of its rule. But then, this type of exuberance is not taken seriously either by the people or by those who indulge in it.

The DMK regime is, however, a big change in one respect. Like the Ministers, the people too seem relaxed, at least on the surface. In urban areas this is especially obvious. The DMK's lighter side of not being just another set of "killjoys" has its own appeal to certain sections.

The growing unemployment, unrest on the industrial front, the growing adherence to *status quo*, agrarian unrest—all these and others do not yet get articu-

late expression in the "conditioned mood of relaxation shown both in eloquence and example of the DMK leaders.

This is inevitable when the paradox of the political situation entitles the ruling party to claim "ally status" with all other political groups except the Congress which should normally play the role of opposition when it is not in the seat of power.

The DMK alone rules the State with its absolute majority in the Assembly. If any single party is deemed to be in absolute power, it is the DMK, both in fact and in theory. How far this absolute power will corrupt the DMK, of rather how long it will take the DMK to reflect the impact of visible corrupting influences, are things not very much in doubt. The DMK ought to be more concerned with this prospects than the Congress which has more or less resigned to the position of being long years in political exile.

January 14

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Shift in Emphasis

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE one-year old Telangana agitation for separate Statehood celebrated its first anniversary on January 15 by observing a one-day students strike and a general hartal.

The leaders of the agitation say that germination has been delayed, and assure the people that their agitation is bound to bear fruit.

Reactions to this claim is varied: some say it is a false conception, others say there was no conception at all, a large number of others have become indifferent. Of course, there are a few diehards and dogmatists who still believe they will receive the happy news some day in future.

Irreconcilable Differences

The first conference of the Telangana Praja Samiti, held under the chairmanship of Dr M. Chenna Reddy on January 10 and 11, provided an occasion for the believers as well as non-believers to assess their pessimism or optimism about the issue.

The conference took place in the background of irreconcilable differences within the leadership of the Samiti, a clear 'No' from both the ruling and Opposition Congress to the demand for a separate State, a growing indifferent attitude and disinterestedness on the part of the mass of people, and a Chief Minister who is more firmly in his seat than before, so far as this issue is concerned.

Hearing Dr Chenna Reddy and other delegates through the two-day conference, one felt there was more of anti-Brahmananda

Reddy tirade, more vituperative attacks on the domination of and suppression by the Andhra leadership; comparatively less emphasis on the demand for separate Telangana (this should not mean that there was no reiteration of their conviction); and most important, lot of emphasis on alternatives like referendum, opinion poll, the need for facing long-term imprisonment if necessary in the course of the "long-drawn-out" struggle ahead.

February 20 was set as the dead-line before which the Centre was asked to spell out its decision. (This was not the first time that such dead-lines were announced. The first dead-line was February 10, 1970.)

The expected fire, impatience, determination, restiveness, anger and defiance was not seen on the faces of the delegates, though there was clapping and shouting whenever there was an attack or sally against Sri Brahmananda Reddy.

In Retrospect

There is no doubt that the strike and hartal would get good, though not full-throated response and would be followed by usual congratulations from leaders to the people for making the observance of the anniversary a success. But there were many successful hartals and strikes earlier and by their mere success, they did not bring their goal even one step nearer.

At the turn of the year, it would be worthwhile looking back in retrospect, assess the course of the movement, and the part played by the Government and

the Samiti leaders for resolving the tangle.

The State Government adopted an attitude of ignoring the agitation when it started. Then it started showing concern, wobbled for sometime, used brutal police force, killing agitators by the dozens, detained leaders, indulged in political manoeuvres and manipulation. Now, its approach appears to be one of procrastination and indecision.

The same attitude was adopted by the Central Government as well. Both allowed the situation to drift, with the hope that with the passage of time, with the conflicts developing within the Samiti, with the positive measures they took to tackle the basic grievances, the problem would solve by itself.

Violent Agitation

At first it was dismissed as just an aberration of students and the peaceful agitation was ignored. It was only at the height of the agitation, when it had taken a violent turn, that the Government took some interest in the matter. The situation returned to normalcy and peace was restored—a pre-condition for the Prime Minister to intervene to solve the problem. But, then, the separate Telangana leaders would not be entirely unjustified if they were to say: "Here is peace which they wanted, but they do not solve the problem. So, the only language they understand is violence and agitation. Only violence pays—this is the lesson that the Government wants the people to learn from this agitation."

The State Government has, from the very beginning, taken an unambiguous and clear-cut stand against separate Telangana. But the Centre, besides intervening at a late hour, confused the issue and gave an impression that it had some other solution in mind and roused hopes among Telangana leaders that if they bargained better, they would gain something better.

Though one need not expect politics to proceed on straight

lines, there is no reason why it must be marked by indecision and drift, the ultimate effect of which is retardation of the development of the State as a whole.

None can deny that if the basic grievances of people, particularly of the services, were tackled in time, the main dispute would have been settled. But what has been done in this direction? The surpluses are not quantified till date. After the Supreme Court struck down the reservation clause in services for the region, no alternate method has been evolved which would give confidence to the people of the region that their just claims would not be over looked.

There was only talk of more powers to the Telangana Regional Committee and no action. Even a comparatively smaller demand like a separate Pradesh Congress Committee is not conceded since it will operate against the vested interests in political power.

All this is not to deny the fact that the State Government has taken some steps like allotment of more funds for development of Telangana districts, more resources secured for expediting Pochampad project, an earnest attempt is on to tackle the problems of services, and so on. This can at best be called only tinkering with the problem without going to the roots of it.

Split Leadership

None can quarrel with the Andhra Chief Minister if he resorted to political manoeuvre by reshuffling the Cabinet and enticing a few Telangana leaders in the process. It is a known weapon in the Congress armoury which Dr Chenna Reddy is quite aware of, both in theory and practice. As such, any attack on the Chief Minister on this score, particularly from those belonging to the same party and group is unjustified. But, what is indefensible is the total dependence on this manoeuvre alone for a solution.

It is no small relief to Sri Brahmananda Reddy that splits should develop in the ranks of the Telangana leadership demanding separation and it would not

also cause a surprise if the Government pinned great hope on such developments. But it might prove a costly mistake if it ignores the fact that despite the splits, either on personal or financial grounds, Dr Chenna Reddy's Samiti commands the largest following among them and can still play upon the grievances of the Telangana peoples.

Irresistible Conclusion

Determine the surpluses, assure safeguards to services, arm the regional committee with more powers, expedite developmental works, and caution the more enterprising Andhra against over-ambition—these are the directions in which Government's policies should proceed, and expeditiously at that, to end the agitation.

If there were lapses on the part of the Government in implementing the Gentlemen's Agreement, it is those very Telangana leaders who were in power during the last thirteen years, who should be held responsible. This is an irresistible conclusion of any objective assessment. When the agitation started, the one question that was on the lips of everyone was 'when injustice was being heaped on the Telangana people all these years, what did they do while sitting in the seats of power? Why did not they raise their voice against it then and there itself? The leadership of Telangana was too busy taking advantage of their positions of power to remember their responsibilities to the people.

However, instead of addressing themselves to the task of getting the people's grievances redressed, they saw in this an opportunity to settle their political scores and, incidentally, to corner for themselves more power.

The weak-kneed attitude of the Government in the first few months of the agitation put ideas into their head that they could easily march towards their goal. But, when the Government took a firm stand and later detained them, the leaders realised it was not going to be that easy. Their political slogans like President's rule, removal of Sri Brahmananda Reddy, overshadowed the main

slogan of separate Telangana, which in its turn had already overshadowed the basic grievances of people.

This was a turning point in the movement. Several rounds of talks between them and the Central leaders including the Prime Minister have further swept away the problem from the shores of agitation to the morass of politicking. A political solution alone will enable the Praja Samiti leaders to keep the initiative in their hands.

An impression has gained ground that the whole issue is being taken away from the agitational rails to be placed on political and organisational rails. The Praja Samiti's January conference is an effort in this direction.

But, it was exactly this attempt of Dr Chenna Reddy that deepened the conflicts inside the Samiti, since other leaders like Sri Konda Laxman feared they would be out of lime-light while the former would steal the whole show. Financial bungling and swindling, not uncommon in Congress set-up, was also one of the reasons for widening the split.

Power Crazy

That these leaders are crazy for power even before a separate State could be conceded, was evident from the fact that most of them who did not even sniff at the slogan of a separate Pradesh Congress Committee, originally given by Sri Konda Laxman, started crowding around it when they got the impression at one stage that it might be conceded.

A separate committee would mean power to choose candidates in the 1972 General Elections in this region and Dr Chenna Reddy and other leaders thought it could well be a lever with which they could secure a majority of their own men. There were other accusations against Dr Reddy that he was filling the committees at lower levels with his own caste-men. Sri Konda Laxman accused Dr Chenna Reddy that he joined the movement only to rehabilitate himself politically.

This division in the leadership,

(Continued on page 50)

Fight for Lost Cause

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

IT must be said to Sri C B Gupta's credit that in becoming the Syndicate's sacrificial goat he showed courage. He knows that his politics is doomed, that his Ministry will not last the third week of February, and yet he has joined the battle with pluck.

Busy manipulating an ersatz majority, and saving his support from erosion, Sri Gupta would have saved the fight in him for another day. But the Syndicate left him with no choice. And his loyalty to friends who are in adversity is legendary (did he not whisk away an accused who was his lieutenant, from the police look-up?), even if he is not known for grace and gratitude for one who installed him twice in the Chief Minister's gaddital, the second time less than a year ago.

Not that any body can accuse Sri Gupta of being a clean fighter. That perhaps is not his fault. The forces he represents are rather dark and dirty.

Forgetful Critic

Now it is "no holds barred" for him. If truth is the first casualty, decencies of public life fall by the wayside, or norms of democratic functioning go to the winds, he cannot be bothered. Everything is fair in his love for power and war against progress.

Take an instance. In his new-found concern about public expenditure, Sri Gupta has criticised the Prime Minister's tours. He has conveniently forgotten that he had himself been begging for Prime Minister's tours in Uttar Pradesh for the past 22 years, and that he had persuaded Smt Indira Gandhi to go to his far-off hill constituency of Ranikhet

and address three meetings there during the midterm poll.

He seems to have forgotten that he and his Ministers have been touring the State hectically to buy votes, and addressing meetings composed solely of their security officers, and that such tours are organised all over the world in all democracies since nobody relinquishes politics only because he or she is a Prime Minister.

The simple truth is that he is afraid of the mass upsurge and the direct contact between the Prime Minister and the millions of people. But then, it is difficult for anyone to be honest about one's own weakness.

Convenient Memory

Sri Gupta's reference to the State's backwardness and the Centre's responsibility for it can be another instance. He should have told it to the marines. He has a convenient memory. When he sold Rihand power to the Birlas at less than the cost price and denied the parched fields of the eastern districts much-needed lift irrigation and the unemployed millions a chance to set-up power-driven machines, his conscience was not pricked.

When he had advanced crores as loans to Sahu Jains and Ram Ratan Guptas (and had failed to collect even a modest interest on these loans for a decade), and banned the movement of gur and khandsari year after year to help his friends in the sugar industry, or when he had ruthlessly crushed numerous movements for better wages and a better deal for the poor, his concern for the backwardness of the State had apparently been mortgaged to the

money bags.

But none need take him seriously for his jibes against the Prime Minister. It is a job assigned to him by the Syndicate and he has to go through the motions. For, who knows better than Sri Gupta himself that half of his supporters are still pressing him to make peace with Smt Gandhi and give the Syndicate the go by?

Only 75 days ago Sri Gupta had rushed back to Lucknow from Delhi to draft a resolution for the Executive of the State Congress which criticised the "short-sighted action" of the Syndicate in ousting Smt Gandhi from the Congress "which will disrupt the party and the country".

Elusive Unity

He had shuttled between Delhi and Lucknow time and again to achieve the elusive unity under pressure of these supporters. His lieutenants like Sri Krishnanand Rai and Sri Shanti Prapanna Sharma had told him that he would lose their support if he chose to lean on the Jana Sangh to save his Government.

Sri Gupta is only too keenly aware of the sharp differences even in his close coterie on the issue of his casting his lot with the Syndicate. He also knows that the tide is against him, that the politics in the State has undergone a transformation, and his relevance in the new situation is severely limited. But he has chosen to go down fighting for a lost cause. He will have the satisfaction of doing his duty by the discredited Syndicate.

Sri Gupta had known of the turning tide when in the midterm poll the Congress had done better but his faction had come out worst. Then he had rushed to Delhi to express his gratitude to Smt Gandhi and to talk of being in the Chief Ministerial *gaddi* only for a brief while.

Sri Kamalapati Tripathi and his supporters had paid this price for unity in the party. It was a gift from Smt Gandhi, and Sri Gupta had sung the praises of the

great Nehru family and its great traditions

But Sri Gupta has something of the Old Man of the Sea in him. The brief while became a long while, and he tried to dig his toes in. The days when he swore by Marx and was an ardent Congress Socialist were long past. His only commitment is to himself, the only ideology he now knows is to stand by the big business and the industrial houses.

He would feel properly recompensed for all the humiliation of striking to power with a minority support in the Assembly if he could give some more concessions to the industrialists, say, Obra power to the Birlas.

His Operation Purchase has not shown any tangible result and a majority in the Congress Assembly Party has turned against him. But he does not give up easily.

Dossiers compiled painstakingly on every legislator are again being consulted. If a member has a relation in Government service, that relation is pressed into service to secure the member's support for the tottering Gupta regime. If someone in a member's family has any quota, licence, permit or contract from the Government, he is persuaded to pressurise the member to lend his support to Sri Gupta.

Half a dozen of his lieutenants have been touring the State with cash to sound members to walk over to their side of the fence. The entire governmental machinery has been geared up to keep him in power. If one cannot be bought, one can be bludgeoned into submission, threats of cancelling licences and contracts have been held out.

Political Concessions

And he is prepared to make political concessions. The Congress had voted for exemption of uneconomic holdings from land revenue almost 40 years ago. Sri Gupta consistently opposed it on the ground that the State could ill afford to fritter away its precious resources from this source.

Less than two months ago, he

turned down the demand made by SSP leaders. But now he has to buy SSP support, and he has made a New Year gift to the poor peasantry.

He is opposed to the nationalisation of the sugar industry—his solid support—despite the State Congress, the Congress Assembly Party, the Assembly and the Cabinet voting for it. But he has to think in terms of “co-operativisation” of the industry now because the Jana Sangh wants it.

These and other things he could have gracefully done twenty years ago, but this erstwhile socialist and his industrialist benefactors thought of these measures only when driven to the wall. Sri Gupta really cannot do anything with grace.

Long ago, in his political career, Sri Gupta had learnt that manipulation was better than mass appeal. He had practised it at the city level in Lucknow in the late thirties and when he was chosen as the hatchetman to eliminate the late Rafi Ahmed Kidwai's group from the State Congress he mastered it.

He used the carrot of permits, quotas, licences and contracts, the plums of office and the stick of exposures and disciplinary actions. He won the battle but lost his soul to a style of functioning which alienated him from the people.

Pocket Borough

For twenty years he had systematically worked to make the Congress organisation his pocket borough. Genuine freedom fighters and congressmen were gradually eased out and replaced by his yes-men whose dossiers he prepared in advance to keep them on the leash.

He eliminated the late Sampurnanand from Chief Ministership with the help of his quota-permit-holders and sought to become the State Congress Chief with their help again after being Kamarajed. The Congress High Command had to intervene to expose his “bought” support and Sri Gulzarilal Nanda threw him out of that office ingloriously.

Having lost his ideological

base, Sri Gupta chose to function on the basis of narrower loyalties of caste and region. Gradually he emerged as the leader of a particular community which rule the roost with the support of money bags. These narrow loyalties led to shrinking mass support. He became the boss of a party which had no mass appeal. This was the logic of his politics of vested interests.

When after the eighteen-day rule his Government fell on April 1, 1967, Sri Gupta should have read the writing on the wall. He failed to do it and again failed in the mid-term poll when his group was trounced and he became the Chief Minister on sufferance.

Black Money

Others had become quite as adept in the game played by him. Black money from industrialists, caste manipulations, narrow communal and regional sentiments played an important role in the elections. Sri Gupta must own the responsibility of vitiating the political atmosphere in the State, thoroughly demoralising the administration—which was never known for its efficiency and integrity—and keeping the State backward.

The Bharatiya Kranti Dal, which had begun with the support of a modest group of 18 members of the Assembly, emerged as a big force after the mid-term election. Sri Charan Singh's espousal of the peasant proprietor won him the kulak support, and a vast majority of the backward communities saw in the Dal a new hope.

The Jana Sangh was cut to its size, from 100 to less than 50. The small shopkeeper, petty trader, petty bourgeoisie and rabid Hindu communal support did not stand it in any good stead. Its image of being the only alternative to the Congress misrule had been replaced by the BKD. A polarisation had taken place in the State politics, which cost even the SSP dearly.

Now Sri Gupta, like Canute, wants the wind of change to stop blowing. He is investing a lot in it and has put his future at stake. Even the Sangh and Socialist (?) support will not save his

Government, but there is nothing like trying

Sri Gupta buries his head in the dossiers every time he hears of the mass upsurge in the State. Smt Gandhi has surcharged the atmosphere with a new enthusiasm and politicalised the masses. This had brought about a qualitative change in the situation which cannot be wished away or brushed under the carpet. This enthusiasm is Sri Gupta's nightmare.

The upsurge is also a problem for the new Congress. The people of the State have shown unmistakably that they are with Smt Gandhi. New sections of the people, specially the young and modern, have joined the New Con-

gress. The intelligentsia, the lawyers, doctors, professors, teachers, have come in large numbers to bring about this change. Sri Gupta and his government stand thoroughly isolated.

New Phase

But the organisation has to be converted into an instrument to channelise this enthusiasm and public support into sustained effort to develop the State and to remove the road-blocks like Guptas and Banarsidasses.

The New Congress is confident that Sri Gupta's Government, will be defeated in the first vote taken in the Assembly which

begins its session on February 11. A new Government would be formed, and the House would not be dissolved as Sri Gupta and his supporters have gone about saying

But that will only be the beginning of a new phase of politics. Will the people's support be utilised for progressive measures, development activities, pushing back the forces of reaction? Or, will it be just another government defending the *status quo*? The people have shown their sound judgment, will the leaders do the same?

These are urgent questions which the leaders of the New Congress and their supporters outside the Congress must answer.

January 16

TELANGANA AGITATION *(Continued from page 47)*

ship, more emphasis on politics and less attention to the original demand and their accent on power politics have robbed the movement its attraction and glamour.

It is very doubtful whether the movement, if and when revived, would be a draw, and the mass of the people, even to the extent they had participated earlier, would be coming forward now. This is not to rule out the possibility of violent attacks on property and person, to commit which there are enough hotheads in the Samiti ranks.

What is to be done now? Nothing except what the leaders and Governments at the Central and State level have promised to do. But, for heaven's sake, do them right now and let not the personal and party interests come in the way.

Concede separate Pradesh Congress Committee for Telangana, quantify surpluses and announce a plan for its expenditure in the shortest possible time, assure safeguard for the services, give statutory power to the regional committee. These will assuage the feelings of the people and pave the way for a peaceful solution of the Telangana tangle.

The Syndicate leader, Sri N. Sanjiva Reddy, is already trying to fish in the troubled waters,

talking sympathetically of the Telangana problem and its leaders. This cannot but further complicate the problem and make

the efforts to find a solution more difficult.

January 15

Beef In Ancient India

by

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Retrospect and Prospect

K. M. P.

LOOKING back into the Sixties and looking forward into the Seventies, what looms large is the conquest of outer space. The last of the mysteries, that of the heavens above us, is disappearing.

The landing on the moon is merely the first step in the discovery and conquest of new worlds, Venus is under observation and plans are being made for probing Mars. The Sixties were the years concerned with the preliminaries. It ended with the moon walk.

Will the Seventies see the exploration and settlement, if settlement is possible, on the moon and will the attempt to broaden man's knowledge of the outer world by direct physical contact yield benefits to humanity on this earth?

For the Seventies, the decisive choice will have to be: is the exploration and conquest of outer space going to be a cooperative effort, or will man carry his petty jealousies and rivalries into this sphere also, using space ships and bases on the moon to resolve the power struggle here?

Decisive Choice

The prospects are certainly not bright, outer space is likely to become another field of contest for the super powers and the results of man's technical skill and scientific knowledge, unless wiser counsels prevail will not lead to an improvement in the living conditions of the vast majority on this earth.

Outer space is not the only area where man is trying to wrest the secrets of nature; the oceans and the vast frozen areas of the North and the South still retain

their secrets, man is still unaware of all that the earth holds. The exploration of sea beds is proceeding and the oceans are thought to be a vast reservoir of food. And food and nourishment will be the problem which will continue to plague humanity in the Seventies, the various methods of population control have only touched the fringe of the problem.

The population explosion remains with us, and though there are vast areas still waiting to be developed and the possibility that even areas of old settlement can give much better yields by the application of science and technology, food will remain the major problem for the greater part of humanity.

Curate's Egg

The success of the so-called "green revolution" will have greater meaning for humanity than any success in outer space, paradoxical as this may sound, and unless man is able to face up to this problem, the Seventies will be the decade of hunger and starvation.

It is the prospects on this earth rather than in outer space that is of significance to humanity. Looking on the year that is past and the decade that is over, one can only say that like the proverbial curate's egg, it is good in parts.

The world and particularly the super powers have realised that an arms race with its ballistic missiles, anti-ballistic missiles and anti-anti-ballistic missiles is a race without a finish. Science and technology can always find new and better weapons of destruction and the weapons to counter them,

if not wholly, at least partially. The capacity to over-kill, however, does not ensure security.

Science and technology cannot ensure security but only provide better method, more effective methods of destruction and counter-destruction. Dependence on them means letting the vicious circle continue. Security can only be ensured by a political settlement. This has at last been realised and the most hopeful events of last year were the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) which opened in Helsinki and the Budapest appeal.

It is true that the Helsinki talks were merely preliminary, and judging by what is happening in the Disarmament Conference at Geneva and other arms limitation talks, it is likely to be a prolonged affair and may not yield the results expected. The fact that the talks have at last begun is a hopeful sign for it shows that the great powers have at least realised the futility of the arms race.

European Security

The SALT should not be judged independently, it has to be seen in the context of other attempts. Thus, there is a genuine attempt to prevent the sea bed and space being utilised for military purposes; and if these talks make progress, then the prospect will be very much brighter.

Not that the two super powers will be able to reach an understanding in a year or even two, but if they come to an agreement on the limitation of strategic arms that can be made the basis for further talks and eventually lead to a partial disarmament. It is on the success of these talks in the coming decade that the future will depend. If they fail to agree and go their separate ways in spite of the UN resolutions on chemical and bacteriological weapons, the future will be extremely gloomy.

It is the fact that modern wars have become total and frightful, killing millions and leaving the survivors in a crippled condition—physically and morally—that has led humanity to be

preoccupied with war Hiroshima and Nagasaki showed the destructive potential of the atom bombs. But those were primitive bombs, and the more sophisticated later versions, the hydrogen bomb and the new forms of chemical and bacteriological weapons have made it possible that an armed conflict involving the two super powers will cause havoc and bring untold miseries to the world.

It is this realisation that is leading to a search for detente in Europe. The Budapest appeal by the Warsaw Pact countries, for a European security pact and the dissolution of the military alliances which divide Europe into two, is a welcome move.

The acceptance of existing frontiers, cooperation in economic, political, economic, scientific and technical fields irrespective of the social and political systems prevailing in the countries, an understanding not to use force to change existing frontiers or solve political disputes, will go a long way to defuse the European situation and end the prolonged period of crisis which followed the Second World War.

True, it is an attempt to maintain the *status quo*, but that *status quo* can only be changed by force and the use of force will lead to a world-wide war. The possibility of a European settlement has become brighter with the ending of the twenty year-old Demo-Christian domination in German politics.

Post-war Realities

Chancellor Brandt and Foreign Minister Scheel are trying their best to unfreeze the cold-war stance of Bonn. Brandt responded favourably to the Soviet note and talks are proceeding in Moscow on the renunciation of force to settle disputes and other related matters. A settlement with East Germany is the essential pre-condition for a European detente, for the German problem is at the very centre of the European crisis.

It is the West German refusal to accept the realities of the post-war settlement, the fear

that Bonn will use every means in its power to upset the settlement, that has stood in the way of a permanent detente. Brandt's willingness to accept the Soviet offer, his acceptance of the Oder-Neisse frontier and readiness to enter into talks with Warsaw, his ability to see the German problem itself in a new light by the recognition that there are at present two Germanys (though he is not willing to extend *de jure* recognition to the German Democratic Republic), are all signs that at last the West Germans are willing to face reality.

A European security treaty is all the more necessary now. The first phase of the European Economic Community has come to an end and the second and more important phase is beginning. Whether the Common Market is enlarged or not, European integration will take place.

Changed Balance

With the retirement of General de Gaulle from the French political scene, the West European balance of power has drastically changed. Throughout the Sixties De Gaulle dominated the West European scene, and his presence, the content he gave to French foreign policy and the consistent championing of national independence against American domination, made France the major political force in Europe.

This was the result of his own personality and not the consequence of France's internal strength. The fact that West Germany's greater economic strength and bigger population will make it the most important political force in West Europe, was realised by all. Even before De Gaulle's retirement, the financial crisis of 1968 had shown the West German strength and the shift in the power balance was reflected in Bonn's attitude to its allies.

In the Seventies, this German predominance will become even more marked, particularly if European integration also takes place.

An integrated West Europe, by any account—population, economic resource or scientific

and technical ability—will be a major power, and the danger is that since West Germany will be the dominant power, it may use it to pursue its policies in East Europe, particularly to alter the territorial settlement.

It is true that the other West European countries will be extremely wary of this. The present settlement works equally to their advantage, and an upsetting of the East European settlement and the reunification of the two Germanys, both major economic powers will so drastically alter the power balance in the European community that they most probably cannot even envisage it. The division of Germany which, while leaving West Germany the dominant economic power, has prevented it from overwhelming its partners, has made the EEC possible, and it is in the interests of West Europe to prevent the reunification of Germany.

Bonn will have to make the choice it can have either reunification or West European economic integration, but it is unlikely that it can have both. Brandt appears to have made his choice; and that will make both the European security treaty and West European integration easier to achieve.

Gloomy Prospects

It is in Asia that the prospects not only for the new year but for the entire decade appears to be gloomy. The West Asian situation has progressively worsened. Both the United Arab Republic and Israel are increasing their military strength. Nasser has spoken of doubling his armed forces and Dayan has said that though Egypt has improved its military strength, Israeli superiority over the combined strength of its neighbours is unchallenged.

The activities of the guerillas, both in the occupied territories and inside Israel, continue to cause concern to the Israelis and any times Israeli strikes against the UAR and Jordan might escalate into a major war.

Renewed fighting can take place at any moment. If the Israelis feel that Arab strength poses a threat, it will strike and

strike hard to maintain its superiority. But it is unlikely that the Arabs will engage in a trial of strength unless they are reasonably certain that they can reverse the effect of 1967.

It is, therefore, likely that Israel will start the next round also, and it is possible that this may take place in 1970 itself. The prospect of a negotiated settlement, or a peace imposed by the four powers, is dim. A West Asian war will not endanger world peace, for, even though the two super powers will not actively intervene, they will certainly prevent either party from destroying the other.

Nor is there a firm possibility of the Vietnam war coming to an end during the year. Nixon has written off the Paris negotiations. The withdrawals from Vietnam will still leave an effective American presence, and the Vietnamisation of the war will allow Nixon to maintain a foothold.

Vietnam War

As far as Washington is concerned, the idea of conquering South Vietnam is over, even the Koreanisation of Vietnam is no longer feasible. What the Pentagon and the State Department are hoping is to retain the major American bases and hang on to the major towns, leaving the countryside to the Liberation Front, carrying occasional "pacification" raids into the liberated territories.

There is, thus, no hope for peace in Vietnam, neither this year nor the next. Until the United States drastically revises its Asian policy, it will do everything in its power to retain a foothold in South Vietnam.

More significant and of greater impact is the emergence of Japan as a political force in Asia and the consequence it will have on the power balance in the region. Japan is the strongest economic power in Asia, it is only second to the United States as an industrial power in the capitalist world. With the signing of the Okinawa agreement and the electoral triumph of Sato and the Liberal Party, Japan intends to give up

its low posture and play a political role commensurate with its economic strength.

While there is no doubt about its strength, its weaknesses too must be kept in mind. Japan lacks practically all the raw materials necessary for industry and its traditional suppliers have been China and South-east Asia. Though Japan in recent years has developed its sources of supply by investing in the development of mines in Latin America, Africa and Australia, it is dependent on South-east Asia for tropical products.

Japan's Role

It was this dependence that led Japan to the imperialist adventure in the past, and it is likely to pursue an aggressive foreign policy in the Seventies. Since Japan is compelled to export in order to live, and since China, its traditional market, can make tempting offers, there is every reason to believe that if not immediately, at least in the near future, Japan will seek a re-approchement with Peking.

Tokyo has already started concentrating its fire on the Kuriles and demanding its return from the Soviet Union. This demand has the support not only of the USA, but also of China. At the same time Japan is participating actively in the economic development of Siberia

and the Soviet Far-eastern regions. This economic cooperation between the Soviet Union and Japan portends well for the future, for if it provides Japan with the raw materials for its industries and a market for its exports, Japan may well think twice before embarking on an adventurous anti-Soviet policy.

It will, however, take some time for Japan to loosen its ties with Washington. But once it does, the role it plays in Asia will be a significant one.

The great question mark, however, remains China. Peking's intentions remain shrouded in mystery, but it takes war lightly. The rapprochement with the United States and the continuous quarrel with the Soviet Union will perhaps be accentuated this year and China will provoke further incidents along the frontier. Whether this will lead to war is doubtful, but the Chinese are pursuing a policy of provocations and the present trend of events makes it unlikely that their relations with major neighbours, India and the Soviet Union, will show any improvement.

Thus, the outlook for the Seventies is certainly not bright. But then neither 1969 nor the Sixties gave cause for optimism. The future looks equally bleak unless the super powers reach an agreement on arms limitation and security.

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India From Other Side

ANIRUDHA GUPTA

INDIA IS IN turmoil, wrote a friend from New Delhi; but she also cautioned that though "it is the mightiest battle for the struggle of power, it is useless to confuse the issues with ideological gimmicks". By and large the reports on Indian developments, which appear in the second or third pages of British newspapers, confirm the same view.

The London *Times* reported the other day the radical demands of the Syndicate and a socialist programme (?) by the Jana Sangh. Inder Malhotra's despatches from Calcutta, in the *Guardian*, appear rather colourless and sometimes even timid.

Little Interest

On the whole, however, British intellectuals, journalists, and men of public affairs have shown little interest in Indian political developments. Perhaps this may be due to their preoccupation with other equally important issues.

The entry of Britain into the Common Market agitates the MPs, though the daylight robbery of the French gunboats by the Israelis have caused a new diversion. The Church is yet wholly absorbed in the Biafra issue and the students are searching for another rallying point after the return of the South African Springboks.

Throughout this period the TV reported India only once when India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi ("no relation of Mahatma Gandhi") was "expelled" from the ruling party.

Underneath this seeming indifference what seems to be growing is a belief that Indians

cannot govern themselves, just as the Africans could not. The euphoria of optimism which one had witnessed in the wake of decolonization is over; now the number of cynics is growing.

Many people have begun wondering whether the military would take over in India. Or else, what will happen? A divided India broken into mosaic pieces total anarchy or, simply, stagnation?

Had these doubts been expressed only by a few conservatives, one could have dismissed such queries. But doubts have shrouded even the liberals add those who had been the staunchest friends of the Asians and Africans in the nationalist days.

In his autobiography, *The Editor* (Penguin, 1968), Kingsley Martin expresses his doubts most poignantly. Were men like him—he asks himself—naïve to believe that a better world would emerge after the War? But then why are the Nigerians killing themselves; why the new states have been torn by tribal and atavistic violence; why India and Pakistan could never become friends?

Worst Case

On the other hand, economists ask if India descends into chaos what will happen to her economy? Planning? (Already the word distastes in the mouth.)

In an extremely thought-provoking article entitled "Power Shifts and Regional Balances", A. H. Hanson writes: "Let us start, as Viscount Wavell used to do when preparing for his tortuous discussions with the Indian political leaders, with the 'worst

possible case'. the Selig Harrison syndrome

"This postulates that Congress breaks up into a chaos of irreconcilable factions the States under variously constituted governments, assert their independence of the Centre, meanwhile, throughout the country, casteism and communalism go on the rampage.

"In fact, the 'dominant party' pattern, which has given India's political life its coherence, disintegrates, and there is no emergent alternative pattern to replace it."

Hanson obviously gets disturbed by these prospects and, so, he goes on: "In view of the extreme difficulty of judging the direction in which Indian history is moving, this cannot be ruled out; indeed, it represents one of the alternative extrapolations of existing trends. But, almost certainly, the threat that it embodies is not immediate.

"If there is to be a descent into a chaos of this kind, it is more likely to take the form of a gradual roll than of a sudden drop; and a roll can be arrested, if sufficiently strong countervailing forces are mobilized. In any case, if chaos is really the prospect, any discussion of planning becomes futile, since planning will become impossible" (*The Crisis of Indian Planning*, p. 51).

A planning of some sort we shall certainly have. The Government will on the one hand raise the price of steel (a sound step) and on the other give the Birlas new license for fertilizer industry.

Nothing, it seems to the layman, has discredited planning than the history of planning itself. After the completion of three Plans (and a minus-Forth Plan) we have been told that whatever was our "socialist pattern", our policy had never been to restructure the Indian society but to promote economic growth with only the provision that the existing disbalances in society do not grow more disbalanced!

Is this all for which a whole generation—our generation—had been sacrificed? The poor and the needy ones had to keep patience for twenty years (is it small?)

(Continued on page 71)

MAINSTREAM

German Interest in India

SADHAN MUKHERJEE

IT is a interesting fact of history that almost three centuries ago India figured very prominently in reshaping the direction of economic activity in Germany. India by itself had nothing to do with this development which was essentially negative in nature, it merely acted as a catalytic agent.

The Discovery of the Cape route to India in 1498 literally caused an economic collapse in Germany, the effects of which, as historian AJP Taylor puts it, lasted for 300 years "From being the centre of world commerce, Germany became within a generation an economic backwater"

Taylor explains that the trade of all Europe was poured by Venice into the funnel of the Rhine, and then was poured out from the great cities along the coast of the North Sea and the Baltic

First Success

This transshipment was completely under the control of Germany and around this was built up what is known as the "bourgher domination" in German economy. The discovery of the Cape route was both an economic as well as a political blow. And it seems German imperialism and capitalism never got over this crash and ever since, they had been harbouring the idea of drawing India into their sphere of influence, if not outright domination.

Due to historical circumstances Germany was late in catching up with the industrial revolution, but when it did, it not only advanced rapidly but also demanded a redivision of the world

markets and colonies in order to draw upon their natural resources

In the 17th and 18th centuries Prussian Kings made some attempts at trade with India, and Fredrick II set up something like a German East India Company. But this did not work. The first successful German entry into India was in 1867 when the Siemens got the contract to establish the London Calcutta telegraph line.

Record Figure

From then onwards the pace increased. By 1885, Germany accounted for 0.35 per cent share in India's foreign trade and 1886 saw the German Asiatic Bank open its doors in Calcutta. Just before the beginning of the First World War, the German share in India's foreign trade had gone up to 10.8 per cent (1913 figures).

The export of German private capital to India was also growing simultaneously, and already in 1905 amounted to 105 million Reichmark. Germany was the second biggest exploiter of India after the British.

The war years prevented its further growth but, by 1925, Germany had more than made up its war-time loss. Exports and imports between India and Germany that year reached a record figure of 9,300 million Reichmark!

But German capitalism was not satisfied, it did not want just a share in the Indian market with British capitalism. German imperialism wanted India as a colony. And they went about systematically to achieve this aim. Plans were drawn up both

during the First and the Second World Wars on how to defeat the British and subjugate India

There were also diplomatic moves to achieve sympathy of the Indian people. German Foreign Office man, Graf Ernst zu Raventlow, in his book *India, Its Significance for Great Britain, Germany and the Future of the World* (published in Berlin in 1917), made a thorough exposition of this theme. He argued that the British should be thrown out of India; liberation of India should be effected and then there would follow the heyday of Germany in that country.

Old Aim

It is this imperialist-monopolist aim that Bismarck wanted to see fulfilled, it is the same idea Hitler desired to realise, and it continues even today as the prime mover for one part of Germany that yet basks in the glory and the tradition of the former Reich. It is the Federal Republic of Germany that pursues the old aim, albeit in a modified neo-colonial manner.

Today there are two Germanys two sovereign states but with a world of difference between their approach, attitude and interests. This finds expression in their relations with India as in many other matters.

The two German states are the political reality of recent times but their differing views are in a way the continuation of attitudes that existed even when Germany was one political unit.

Even before the political division, there were two definite trends in Germany *vis-a-vis* India one that was progressive and friendly, and the other seeking colonial interests though ostensibly showing sympathy to Indian national liberation movement.

An interesting study of this contrast has been made by Dr Diethelm Weidman of the Babelsberg Institute of the GDR through painstaking research into old Indo-German relations.

Indians know about Sanskrit scholar Max Mueller, a name which the West German Government bandies about through their "Bhavans". But there was

yet another Mueller—Mainz Niklas Mueller—who, in his book published in 1822, tried to project the real image of India

The book titled *Belief, Knowledge and Art of the Old Hindus in its Original Form and under the Cover of Symbolism*, is a condemnation of the tendentious reports of European travellers and missionaries. He termed the British usurpation of India as exclusively forcible and abominable, and emphatically lamented the suppression of Indian culture. (Quoted from an article by Dr Weidmann).

Democratic Movement

In later years progressive Social Democratic leaders like August Bebel, Wilhelm Liebknecht, Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, etc., campaigned against the concept assiduously spread by German imperialism and capitalism of an "India under German domination". Some of the speeches of these leaders in the German Diet and their writings throw enough light on the anti-colonial positions they had taken against pan-German expansionism.

The growth of democratic and anti imperialist movement in Germany further strengthened the sympathy the progressive Germans had for the Indian people under the British rule. German sailors often acted as couriers for Indian revolutionaries. In 1923, three German sailors from Hamburg brought to Communist leader S.A. Dange in Bombay, bundles of pamphlets of the Communist International.

In 1925 the German workers who themselves were faced with unemployment and rationalisation, supported with money the great Bombay general strike. This movement was organised by the *Rote Fahne*, organ of the Communist Party of Germany. On October 16, 1926, this paper editorially wrote "The proletariat does not need any colonies and condemns any policy of exploitation of the working people of the colonial countries."

The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of Germany pledged full support to the libera-

tion struggles then going on in various countries, including India. German working class support to the accused in Meerut Conspiracy case, German intellectuals' avid study of Buddhism, of the Indian freedom movement, of Gandhiji, etc., are well known. Berlin at one point of time had truly become the centre of activity of Indian revolutionaries in Europe.

This then was the other Germany as counterposed against imperialist Germany that wanted to displace the British and bring India under its own domination. These two trends persist even today, and have already found expression in the policies of the two Germanys that have acquired different political boundaries. This is, of course, not to say that West German citizens as a whole stand by the negative trend as regards India.

Other Germany

But, by and large, the West German Government pursues the old aims of German imperialism and monopoly capitalism, while the other Germany, its Government and the people, have taken upon themselves the duty to continue and develop the progressive traditions that Germany's best sons stood and fought for. This is the essence of the relations between India and the two German states.

The volume of trade between any two countries is a measure of their relations. This yardstick fits very well as far as India and the two German states are

concerned. Let the facts speak for themselves.

This persistent and tremendous volume of India's adverse trade balance is roughly three times the total of the so-called "aid", that West Germany has given to "help" India's development programme! The current annual rate of aid pegged at 250 million DM from West Germany is largely accounted for in debt servicing and similar payments that India is compelled to make over for the old assistance it has received!

The loan payable to West Germany in foreign currency directly stood at Rs 133.14 crores at the end of the Second Plan; Rs 308.01 crores at the end of the Third Plan, and at Rs 462.6 crores at the end of May 1969!

The West German private Investment was only one million in 1948, by 1958 it was Rs 33 million, in 1963, Rs 230 million and by 1965 it had gone up to 245 million.

Besides direct investment, there are also portfolio and other investments. In several cases of West German investments, even the limits of the Industrial Policy Resolution have been violated.

Balanced Trade

As against this, India's trade with the German Democratic Republic is balanced and involves no foreign exchange. In fact, the GDR was the first country to start rupee-based trade with India.

Whatever shortfall occurs in India-GDR trade is covered by

Table I
TRADE BETWEEN INDIA AND WEST GERMANY

(rupees in crores)

Year	Imports	Exports	Adverse Trade Balance
1958-59	94.5	15.2	-79.3
1959-60	116.5	21.0	-95.5
1960-61	122.5	18.94	-103.56
1961-62	122.88	20.64	-102.24
1962-63	98.66	16.27	-82.39
1963-64	90.46	20.16	-70.30
1964-65	109.33	17.57	-91.76
1965-66	137.2	17.97	-119.23
1966-67	162.85	25.88	-136.97
1967-68	143.2	21.7	-121.5
1968-69	120.0	26.5	-93.5

the long-term agreement as well as by the swing limit of the bank credit and continuation understanding. There does not exist any state-level credit arrangement because the Government of India does not recognise the Government of the GDR and an offer of Rs 35 crores made some years ago by the GDR was turned down by India.

India's trade with the GDR began only in 1954, and amounted to Rs 2.2 crores in 1955. This turnover rose to about Rs 50 crores in 1969 and is expected to reach Rs 70 crores in 1970.

There is yet another significant point in the India-GDR trade. Exports to the GDR include finished and semi-finished products of Indian industry and their volume is increasing. Very little finished and semi-finished Indian industrial products are bought by West Germany.

Agreements have recently been signed between India and the GDR whereby the GDR will supply India ten ships, 7,000 tractors and other agricultural equipment in addition to other commodities. It will also help India set up a tractor manufacturing plant. The GDR today supplies almost 65 per cent of India's potash fertilisers. It has supplied several complete plants in cable making, fish processing, etc.

Discussions have begun to enlarge the scope of economic cooperation between the two countries and to raise it to the level of effective division of labour and not to leave it only at the stage of exchange of commodities. And all this obviously without any foreign exchange commitment.

International Affairs

The difference between the GDR's economic relations with India and that of West Germany and India requires no further explanation.

Take yet another aspect international affairs. Again, the distinct reflection of two Germanys' two attitudes. The GDR's foreign policy tenets are closest to the basic principles of India's foreign policy—peace, peaceful coexis-

Table II
TRADE BETWEEN INDIA AND THE GDR
(rupees in crores)

Year	Import	Export
1963	20.5	19.5
1964	17.6	19.4
1965	23.3	23.9
1966	27.4	24.2
1967	24.5	21.8
1968	22.2	24.5

tence, non-alignment, etc. The GDR's Constitution specifically prohibits a war to start from its soil, the West German Constitution does not. Wary as we are of the blasts of the past—the two world wars emanating from the German soil—shall we not see the basic difference between the two constitutions?

Dark Blot

In terms of anti-imperialism, anti-colonialism and solidarity with the peoples fighting for their national liberation, India and the GDR are in the same camp, while West Germany is in the opposite. West German assistance to the Americans in Vietnam and to Israel in West Asia are just two of the many examples of this reality.

The entente cordiale between China and West Germany, West German military aid to Pakistan, condemnation of India's act of liberation of Goa by West Germany, and the political denigration campaign in West German press recently of the progressive policies of Smt India Gandhi, are revealing facts by themselves.

One can go on multiplying examples whether in political relations or in trade and economic cooperation, in cultural or scientific exchanges, in foreign policy issues, and so on, but what runs as a common thread through them is the divergent approach and attitude of the two German states: one, a new Germany, and the other marching in the footsteps of old Germany.

And yet both want India to be in their camps. The GDR for

strengthening the camp of peace and friendship, and the FRG for its neocolonial exploitation.

It is a dark blot on India's foreign policy of nonalignment that it has failed to accord diplomatic relations to GDR. India is still identified only with the pallbearers of old Germany. And this failure persists now for twenty years.

The new Social Democrat and Free Democrat Coalition Government in West Germany headed by Willy Brandt, is committed to continue the old policy, and has made it abundantly clear that it would continue to apply the notorious Hallstein Doctrine which envisages severance of all relations between West Germany and third countries in the event of their recognising the GDR.

Recognise GDR

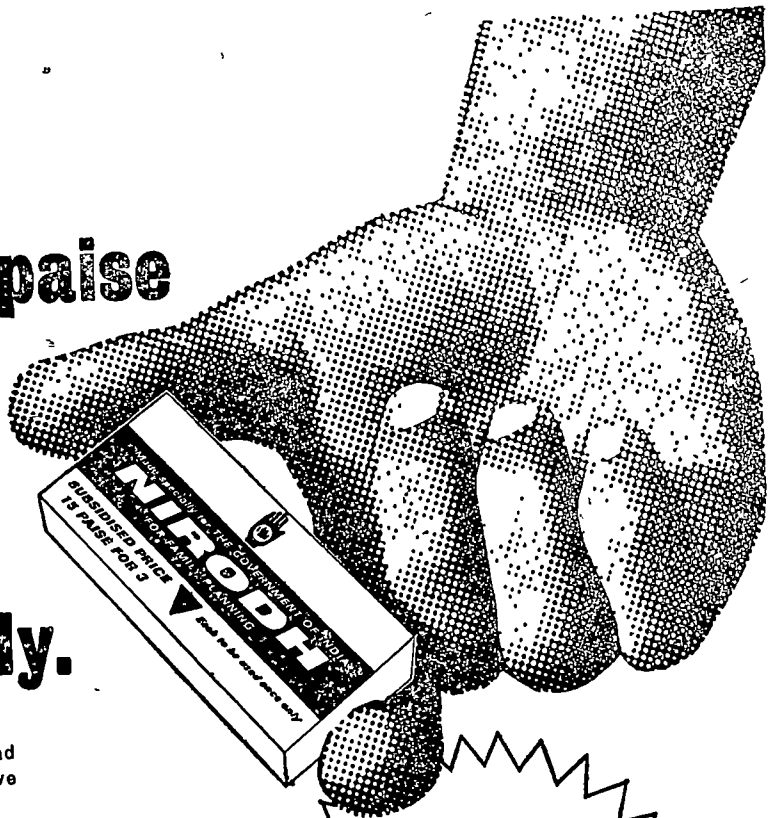
The Hallstein umbrella is full of holes and recently some more have been added by several Afro-Asian countries which ignored the West German threat and recognised the GDR. There is also a democratic opinion growing in West Germany itself which rejects the gun-boat diplomacy of West German government.

If India has to attest to goodwill and friendship, if it has to acknowledge the best traditions of India-German relations, if it has to testify to the genuineness of non-alignment, the Government of India must take courage in both hands and assert: to hell with your Hallstein Doctrine, we shall recognise the GDR. Let us remember West Germany cannot afford to be isolated.



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Bigger Arms Race in the 70's

I.F. STONE

DESPITE euphoric reports about the SALT talks and the \$5.9 billion cut in the final defence budget this fiscal year, the military monster is far from being subdued. It takes a long time before cuts in Congressional authorization and appropriation bills actually lead to cuts in expenditure.

The best guide to actual expenditures is the daily U.S. Treasury statement. Its January 2 statement covering all but the last two days of the first half of the 1970 fiscal year is not encouraging. The cash deficit for the six months was \$12.4 billion as against \$7.8 billion in the same period last year. To this deficit the military establishment was a prime contributor, despite the first withdrawals from Vietnam and talk of reduced commitments.

In the first half of the fiscal year the military drew more than half a billion (\$685 million) more from the Treasury than in the corresponding period a year ago. The rate of increase seemed to be going up. In December alone, military spending was more than \$1 billion higher than in December a year ago. The tempo of military spending is still feeding the fires of inflation.

Four Trillion

The Tax Foundation estimates that in 1970 the average tax burden per American family for defence will be \$1,250 a year. For those families lucky enough to be on the gravy train of the military-industrial complex, this tax is easily outweighed by

their earnings. Indeed, from an economic point of view, the arms race is a device for taxing the poor to the profit of the well-to-do.

The prospect for a change in the 70s is dim. The Arms Control and Disarmament Agency estimates that the world has spent \$4,000 billion on arms since 1900 and, at the current rate of increase, will spend that much again in the coming decade alone. That, too, will not help our chronic inflationary fevers.

There is little reason to believe that the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) will change the picture much, if at all. The two biggest escalations which lie ahead are those to be sparked by MIRV, the multiple independent targeted missile warheads, and the ABM, the anti-ballistic missile. There is no sign that Washington or Moscow is prepared to halt either.

Pentagon's Leak

The constant and pleased assurances from the State Department and the Pentagon that the Russians at Helsinki were behaving splendidly and avoiding "propaganda" are—in our opinion—cause for depression, not optimism. If Moscow were militantly for disarmament or arms control, we may be sure this would be stigmatized as "propaganda".

Disarmament buffs had naively assumed that a main purpose of the SALT talks was to block MIRV, for once the missiles on both sides are outfitted with the multiple warheads, it will be impossible for either side to know by aerial surveillance how many

warheads there are atop each missile on the other. The fog and the fear will come down again, and it will be hard to keep the arms race within any bounds at all.

But the Pentagon is now leaking the revelation that there has never been much if any intention on our side to curb MIRV. William Beecher, who covers the Pentagon for the *New York Times*, reported in a dispatch to his paper on December 31 that while the Johnson Administration in the summer of 1968 was prepared to propose a freeze on strategic weapons, there was to be no limitation on "improvement of systems within the limited numbers", including MIRVs.

Obsolete Missiles

This was the first public disclosure of the Johnson negotiating position. George C. Wilson, who covers the Pentagon for the *Washington Post*, reported (January 1) from a similar briefing with unnamed officials that "the Nixon Administration view is that multiple-warhead submarines are a fact of life already", so MIRV discussion would focus on the land-based missiles; "but according to informed sources, the Soviet showed little interest at the SALT talks in calling off the flight tests of MIRV missiles". Clearly the Nixon Administration shares this lack of interest.

The second biggest item of future arms spending is the ABM. The Pentagon is beginning to leak stories designed to build up support for its escalation. Beecher reported in the *New York Times* (January 2), "Administration Expected to Back ABM Expansion." The Associated Press was told that if the Russians continue building SS9s at the current rate, they will have 420 by 1974-75 and that these 420 would then be able to wipe out 95 per cent of our 1,000 Minutemen in a surprise attack.

The arithmetic sounds like pure Pentagon Munchhausen. Unanswered is the question of why anyone would risk a first strike at our Minutemen when this would expose the Soviet Union to destruction from our submarine

This is reproduced from the well-known U.S. journal, *I.F. Stone's Bi-Weekly* (January 12, 1970).

missile fleet. Another question no one raised at the backgrounder was—if land based missiles are now so vulnerable to first attack, are they not obsolete?

Indeed, the House Appropriations Committee report on the new defence budget (December 3, p 78) suggests that instead of spending millions to bury the missiles in “very costly” hard rock silos and in defending them with more ABMs, it would be better to replace them altogether with submarine or mobile land missiles “The final argument for expansion,” the AP account said, with untended irony, “is that it would cost less now than later in the face of rising prices and inflation.”

The House report noted that the fiscal 1969 military budget was seven times the military budget of 1948, just two decades ago. It may easily double and redouble within the next ten years. The reductions in the 1970 budget were mostly cuts in fat

and waste, old ships were mothballed, headquarters staffs—military and civilian—were cut down. Development contracts were stretched out.

The budget cuts were a tactical retreat. In that retreat the Pentagon saved the major new weapons system whose costs will proliferate into billions during the next decade. Senator Hatfield (R Ore) spelled out a few of them in his speech on final passage (December 15).

There was \$100 million for AMSA, the new strategic bomber, it would eventually cost from \$8 billion to \$23 billion. The \$450 million for the new F-14 plane launches a programme that will cost from \$15 to \$30 billion. The \$425 million for a new nuclear attack aircraft carrier will give us 15 such task forces eventually; each costs \$1 billion. The \$5 million for the new Navy underwater missile system (UIMS) is another item which will escalate into billions. These are but a few

samples of the spiralling expenditures ahead.

Most important of all, despite talk of cutbacks, the new troop level strength next June will still be 3.2 million men, down only 260,000 from the previous June, and three-quarters of a million men higher than in the first Kennedy year when the military build-up began.

This huge force is the embodiment of a continued Pax Americana. “A projection of threats and contingencies,” Hatfield said, “that are far overdrawn and bear little relation to the contemporary realities of international affairs.”

This year’s appropriation, though reduced somewhat, still “allows us to station troops on foreign soil throughout the globe, where their mere presence often contributes more to the undermining of our relations with foreign nations than to our own security.”

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USA : Soldiers Against War

SCHOFIELD CORYELL

THE increasingly massive domestic opposition to the relentless American war in Vietnam, in recent months has found a new and valuable ally the GIs themselves—those expendable instruments of destruction and mass murder, who sometimes remain human beings under the uniform

The symptoms of this new—and, for the military authorities, highly disturbing—dissidence within the ranks of the American military machine are varied and multiple the birth and growth of groups and organisations opposed to the Vietnam War, anti-war newspapers produced by soldiers, coffee houses on the outskirts of military camps functioning as centres of discussion and debate, GI participation in demonstrations calling for the immediate withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam, organized protest against racism and brutality in the Army

New Challenge

All this intense new activity—which the authorities do their best to punish and contain, without notable success—reflects a particularly significant rift in the already riddled and shaken facade of the once-vaunted “One-dimensional Society”, to use Marcuse’s apt expression

Coming on the heels of the Black Revolt in the nation’s impoverished ghettos, and the university youth rebellion, the spreading revolt of a portion of the American soldier population is creating a new and particularly ominous challenge to a power-structure that feeds on expansionism and war

In view of the widespread impact of the vast “Peace Now!” demonstrations in October and November—which, though not anti-imperialist in content, gave concrete, visible proof of the war’s overwhelming unpopularity—this extra dimension of anti-war activity inside the armed forces destroys completely the Administration’s over-worked justification for its aggression as an effort endorsed by the “majority of the American people”

Spreading Dissatisfaction

Yet, the war goes on as destructively and mercilessly as ever—despite gestures to the “doves” such as token troop withdrawals—and the concrete profiteers continue to reap the benefits of the far-away bloodshed, while the youth of America, mainly the Blacks and the poor in general, are called upon to pay the price

One of the most striking evidences of the new GI opposition to the war were the stories recently printed in various US newspapers about the quiet but obvious identification of some of the American soldiers on duty in South Vietnam with the October and November anti-war demonstrations. Photos appeared on the front pages showing GIs on guard near the battle-zones wearing black arm-bands as a sign of their moral support for the anti-war actions taking place in the United States

The *New York Times* of November 14 reported the activities of a courageous 26-year old New York dentist, Captain Allen Goldstein, on duty with a medical unit at the huge 50,000-man army base of Long Binh, who

circulated among his fellow soldiers a petition of support for the anti-war moratorium.

The Captain is quoted as saying “The big slogan of the people back home who support the war is ‘Support the Troops’. Well, you could count the soldiers here in favour of this war on your hands and toes”

A further hint of spreading disaffection inside the army was provided by a November 13 AP dispatch reporting the transfer of ten black GIs stationed in US military bases in Germany. The reason given for the transfer was “threatening and inflammatory statements” made at all-Black meetings

A military spokesman explained that the “command from time to time deems it prudent to remove individuals whose activities have been found to be prejudicial to morale, discipline or good order”

These, of course, are but a few surface expressions of a deep and widespread disaffection within the US army ranks everywhere. Underlying the open political forms of opposition are the thousands of signs pointing to a spreading demoralization and the crumbling of normal discipline

Thus, the staid financial daily, the *Wall Street Journal*, reports an astonishing upswing of desertion and unauthorized absence rates which in recent months have reached record-breaking proportions

“The Army’s desertion rate,” specifies the *Journal*, “has trebled in the past three years, and now stands at twice the rate that prevailed during the Korean War. The AWOL (Absent Without Leave) rate has doubled in the past two years and unauthorized absences are now apparently at record highs at nearly every Army base in the US”

The Army officials, according to the *journal*, are painfully aware of the impact of the civilian anti-war movement, and of the growing public aversion to the war, on soldier attitudes. Army officials feel that “the desirability of going AWOL or deserting is enhanced because society doesn’t seem to frown so much on the disobedient soldier.”

According to an army psychiatrist quoted by the *journal*, another strong encouragement to desertion is the realization that, for all its overwhelming technological power, the U S has been unable to defeat the vietnamese resistance. "This gives the soldier a feeling of defeatism or purposelessness," explained the psychiatrist. "He wants to dissociate himself from an apparent loser."

Such is the background of confusion, resentment and growing rebelliousness which has given rise to a well-organized and highly political movement of GIs against an unjust war. The anti-war movement in the army got started on a very modest scale with isolated cases such as those of the three soldiers of Fort Hood, Texas (the famous "Fort Hood Three") who refused to go to Vietnam in 1966, and of Captain Howard Levy who refused to train Green Berets for Vietnam. All were sentenced to prison terms, but their example led to a veritable avalanche of resistance and rebellion.

Organised Resistance

Mike Smith—the good-natured, quick-witted lawyer who has been defending soldiers court-martialled for their anti-war activities—explained to me: "Desertion as a method of registering opposition to the war is politically ambiguous and ineffectual, since the motives are always unclear and mixed, and it can never become massive enough to affect materially the operation of the military machine. So the idea has been gaining ground that the best way to fight against the war is through organised resistance inside the army."

As Smith pointed out, the dissident soldiers who scrupulously follow the basic rules and regulations of the camp, and even learn their soldiers trade well, are entirely within their legal rights when they exercise freedom of speech and expression—guaranteed, in writing at least, by the American Constitution—to criticism the war and organize against it.

These perfectly legal—but, in the army context, quite un-

usual and even "revolutionary"—tactics have not saved the dissidents from frequent harassment and persecution, but they have certainly created an extremely delicate and embarrassing situation for the officialdom, which has never before faced such a concerted challenge to the undiluted authoritarianism of the military society.

Among the anti-war soldiers are many blacks who link the fight against the imperialist war with the fight against racial oppression in the United States and in the army. They are joined by many Puerto Ricans, another colonized people, and by many working class whites (ineligible for draft exemptions) who recent the irrational authoritarian methods of the army and soon begin to see themselves as powerless tools of an immoral policy of destruction and annihilation, of which the My Lai affair was but one example.

Typical of the experiences of GI opposition to the war policy is the story of the "Fort Jackson Eight"—the soldier militants from Fort Jackson, North Carolina, who organized an active anti-imperialist group called "GIs United Against the War in Vietnam."

Anti-War Organization

The experience began early last year with the efforts of several Left-wing black GIs to stir up discussion on the base around the issues of war and racism. They hit on the idea of playing some Malcolm X tape recordings in the barracks during off-hours to all who cared to listen. The meetings caught on and grew rapidly larger while the discussion they provoked became more intense and meaningful.

At first only blacks attended, but later—initially out of curiosity—white GIs turned up as well and soon adopted an anti-war attitude along with the others. The discussions prompted by the words of Malcolm, turned on the nature of the Vietnam War, racism and imperialism. The GIs who had seen action in Vietnam were

particularly vehement in their opposition to the war.

On the basic issue of cooperation between black and white soldiers, one of the activists, a black militant, said in an interview published in the *International Socialist Review* (July-August 1969) "We explained to the white GIs that if they wanted to come they had to accept black power, the demolishing of racism. They had to believe in equality and self-determination for all people, including black people, Puerto Ricans and the other minority peoples in the country, and the majority of all the people in the barracks. They agreed. It was not complicated to get over, you know. The younger generation is capable of seeing things that the older generation seldom sees."

Symbolic Name

The meetings led to the establishment of an organization and the choice of a name. As an activist put it "We wanted a name that just told what the group was. We had to have 'GIs' and 'United' because it was blacks, whites, American Indians, Puerto Ricans, and we were against the war in Vietnam, so, after some discussion, that name was chosen." And so was born "GIs' United Against the War in Vietnam".

As the organization spread, its militants were singled out for persecution and torment, and a campaign of lies was launched against it by the officers to disrupt the growing unity between white and black GIs, but the group continued its activities despite it all.

In addition to public discussions and the distribution of Left-wing literature, a petition campaign was started in support of a group of GIs at Fort Hood, Texas, who were being court-martialled for refusal to act as "riot control" troops during the Democratic Party Convention in Chicago, in August 1968.

All this activity caused so much commotion that the mass media focussed on the situation in the camp and the TV came to interview the militants before

millions of viewers By now the authorities were genuinely frightened.

Finally, after an attempt by some militants to hold a larger meeting than usual on the grounds, eight of the ring-leaders were brought up for court-martial on charges such as disrespect, holding an illegal demonstration, disobeying an order, etc

Underground Press

Anti-war and free-speech groups organized vigorous publicity around the case and the Civil Liberties Union provided first-rate legal defence In the end, the prosecution efforts proved so ridiculously ineffectual that the charges were dropped and the defendants were thrown out of the army with "dishonourable discharges", which they intend to contest in the courts

The Fort Jackson experience—or something like it—was repeated with local variations in camp after camp throughout the United States, although the dissidents did not everywhere succeed in getting the same publicity and public support.

One of the most characteristic instruments of resistance used by the GI militants are the anti-war and anti-militarist newspapers, produced off base by the soldiers, which circulate surreptitiously from hand to hand inside the camps, creating a sense of solidarity and strengthening the soldiers' convictions in the face of the barrage of official indoctrination and conditioning

Their very titles are significant—*The Last Harass*, *The Shakedown*, *Your Military Left*, *Fatigue Press*, etc There were about forty such journals at the last count Nor is the Navy spared from this form of agitation. A sailor, Roger Lee Priest, is now on trial for sedition for his activities as editor of such a newspaper.

The GI coffee houses are another particularly wide-spread vehicle of opposition to the military system and the Vietnam War They have been mushrooming all over the country in recent months and play a vital role in breaking through

the wall of propaganda and official lies regarding the war in Vietnam and American foreign policy generally

The coffee houses, located just outside the military bases, are usually manned by radical students or other activists who volunteer their services as a contribution to the anti-war effort. From time to time the Government tries to clamp down on them, often through the ruse of accusing the coffee houses of being centres for the dissemination of drugs.

Closely connected with the explicit opposition to the war are the developing struggles against the authoritarianism and deliberate cruelty of the military world Often the two fights merge into one, and re-inforce each other Particularly acute are the struggles, frequently spontaneous, against the increasingly intolerable conditions in the stockades where soldiers are repeatedly sent for minor or major infractions of discipline.

Outright Rebellion

Badly overcrowded, constantly bullied, deprived of normal amenities such as dental and medical care, or decent toilet facilities, the soldiers are more and more frequently driven to outright rebellion against their tormentors.

A recent case of such rebellion occurred at the Fort Dix, New Jersey, army base last June, and today 38 GIs are being court-martialled for their participation in an uprising of 200 men in the stockade there Several of the defendants are militants of the American Servicemen's Union, an organization, not recognized by the authorities, devoted to the defence of the soldiers' interests

Last October about 5,000 civilian anti-war demonstrators visited the base to express solidarity with the soldier rebels Military Police forces, with tear gas and drawn bayonets, attacked the demonstrators who as they retreated shouted "Free the Fort Dix 38!" and "Power to the People!"

A committee of support to the Fort Dix 38 has been formed with the cooperation of the SDS,

the High School Action Union, the Youth Against War and Fascism, Resistance, and other groups. The wording of their petition puts the problem in its true perspective: "These 38 Americans have been impressed into an army fighting an imperialist war These men have revolted against the oppression and inhuman conditions of stockades created by this oppression The crime is not theirs but that of their oppressors"

More recently, a new group, the Movement for a Democratic Military, has been formed at the huge Marine training camp of Pendleton, in California, where 70,000 recruits in this toughest, harshest branch of the Service, get their basic training. Here, absence without leave as well as acts of individual resistance against the ruthless discipline have been frequent, and the stockades are overflowing with "insubordinate" soldiers Riots among the prisoners have attracted the attention of the mass media on several occasions.

The Movement for a Democratic Military is trying to give a radical political content to this spontaneous rebelliousness. A nearby coffee house is buzzing with discussion, and a soldiers' newspaper—*Attitude Check*—expresses the views of the anti-war dissidents who are becoming more and more numerous. On December 14, over a thousand anti-war GIs, marching alongside 4,000 civilians, demonstrated near camp Pendleton under the auspices of the Movement for a Democratic Military.

Taken aback by unprecedented developments of this sort, the Pentagon has recently issued a directive—"Guidance on Dissent"—dealing with the methods of coping with the GI opposition Fearful of provoking even greater resentment among the troops, the Pentagon, in its directive, warns against openly crushing all dissent in flagrant violation of the Constitution Soldiers' journals, it points out cannot be banned "unless subversive" and the coffee-houses are not "in themselves illegal".

(Continued on page 71)

A Year of Panther Struggle

CHARLES HIGHTOWER

IF, according to the Yippies, 1968 was the "Year of the Pig", 1969 has clearly been the year of the Panthers, or specifically the year of a carefully coordinated conspiracy of federal, state and local agencies to "get the Panthers".

On April 2, 1969, FBI and policies raids, carried out before dawn, arrested 21 members of the Black Panther Party in New York. The Panthers were charged with "conspiracy in the first degree" to bomb department stores and police stations.

Seven Prisons

Seven months after the initial indictment, District Attorney Frank S. Hogan added two counts charging intent to dynamite the Bronx Botanical Gardens and intent to bomb the Queens branch of the Board of Education building.

Incarcerated in seven New York prisons, the Panther men and women have been subjected to continual harassment, surveillance, and brutality by officials. And with the exception of Lonnie Epps 19, who was to be able to post initial bond of \$50,000, none of the other defendants have been out of jail since April 2.

Trial date has been set for February 2 in Federal Court, Foley Square, Manhattan.

The arrests of the Panther 21 removed the leadership cadre of the New York Panther organization. Robert Collier was Minister of Education for the party in New York City, Richard Moore was a field marshal for the metropolitan area and a member of the Central Staff of the National leadership; and Lulmu-

mba Abdul Shakur was captain of the New York City district and also a member of the Central Staff.

Other Panther officers included in the bust were Michael Tabor, a captain and Central Staff member, Curtis Powell, security captain for New York State, William King, security lieutenant; Clark Squires, finance lieutenant, and local section leaders Afeni Shakur and Larry Mack.

The 12 other Panther prisoners were key members of the organization in New York City. They are Mashina, Sekou Odinga, Kwesi Balagoon, Ali Bey Hassan, Catarra, Baba Odinga, Shaba-Um, Jamal Baltimore, Richard Harris, Mkubwa, Joan Bird, and Lonnie Epps.

During an "interrogation" that followed the pre-dawn raid on her home, Miss Bird was severely beaten by a goon squad of six cops. When she was hung by her feet from the window of the detention centre. When she appeared in court for arraignment, Panther attorney Gerald Lefcourt unsuccessfully attempted to have the arresting officers placed under custody.

Wholesale Murder

But Panther year 1969 saw the acceleration of the official campaign to wipe out the Black Panther Party from one of imprisoning the leadership—Huey P. Newton, David Hilliard, Robby Seale, 14 members of the New Haven, Conn., Black Panther Party, and the New York Panther 21—to the stage of murdering key Panthers such as 20-year old Walter "Torre" Pope, distribution manager for the party

newspaper, *The Black Panther*, of the Southern California district, killed by Los Angeles police in October.

To date, 28 Panthers have been murdered by the police, including the party secretary, 17-year-old Bobby Hutton, in April 1968, Seattle Panthers, Sidney Miller and Welton Armistead, John Savage, a San Diego, California, Panther, and Los Angeles Panther members Arthur Morris, Tommy Lewis, Robert Lawrence, Steve Bartholomew, Frank Diggs, and Nathaniel Clark.

On November 13, Chicago police killed Panthers Jake Winter and Larry Roberson in an attack on a Panther apartment on the South side. On December 4, in a search and destroy mission, agents of the Cook County (Chicago) District Attorney's office murdered Fred Hampton, chairman of the Illinois Black Panther Party, and Mark Clark, Panther leader from Peoria, Illinois.

Fascist Method

The assassination took place inside Hampton's apartment at 2337 West Monroe St. on Chicago's West Side. Hampton was murdered in his bed, his body riddled with bullets, his mattress soaked with blood.

Clark, who had helped to establish the Peoria branch of the Illinois party, was shot through the door when he responded to a knock that came, literally, in the middle of the night.

The police attack wounded four other Panthers who were in Hampton's apartment, Ronald Satchel, 19, minister of health for the Illinois chapter, who was wounded in the right leg, thigh and right hand, Brenda Harris, 18, shot in the right leg, Balir Anderson 18 wounded in the right thigh and leg, and Verlina Brewer, 17, shot in the buttocks and right knee.

On May 22 in New Haven, 12 Panthers were arrested on charges of kidnap and murder in the death of Alex Rackley, 24, a New York Panther. Police contend that the Panthers suspected Rackley of being one of the informers in the Panther 21 case and consequently executed him.

after a kangaroo trial on May 19 in New Haven

A subsequent indictment was issued on Panther national chairman Bobby Seale. Seale, who was in New Haven on May 19 to speak at Yale University, denies he ever knew Rackley. "This is a typical bit of fascism", Seale said of the charges against the Panthers. And the Panthers charge that the police killed Rackley and are attempting to frame the Panthers as part of the nation-wide government conspiracy against the party.

Meanwhile, in June, two members of the Colorado Panther Party, Landon Williams and Rory Hithé, were arrested in Denver in connection with the Rackley murder. Extradiction requests by Connecticut officials were upheld in Denver at hearings before Judge Don Bowman.

At this writing, the Panthers have filed appeal to the Colorado State Supreme Court, but it is just about a foregone conclusion that Williams and Hithé will join the Connecticut Panthers in another mass-trial against the organization membership.

Trial of the New Haven Panther group, it is believed, will begin in late January or early February. While awaiting trial, Frances Carter, 20, gave birth to a baby on November 12. She has subsequently been released on bail. Two other Panther sisters, Rose Smith, 18, and Loretta Lukes, 22, were pregnant.

Loretta Lukes has changed her plea to guilty on the charge of conspiracy to commit kidnapping. At a December 1 hearing before Superior Court Judge Aaron J. Palmer in New Haven, Miss Lukes identified voices on a tape played in court as being among the defendants. She said all 14 of the Panthers accused were at Panther headquarters during the interrogation of Rackley.

Another defendant also entered a guilty plea. George Sams pleaded guilty to murder in the second degree, during the bail hearing in State Supreme Court on December 1. The Panthers charge that Sams is a police informer who may have killed Rackley on official authority.

Jailed in Connecticut are

Lonnie McLucas, Warren Kimbro and Sams who are charged with the slaying and kidnap; accused of being accessories to murder and with kidnap are Ericka Huggins, Margaret Hudgins, George Edwards and Rose Smith, Rose Smith and Maude Francis, 18, are in the Juvenile detention centre in New Haven.

Three days after the murder of Hampton and Clark by cops in Chicago, the Panther national headquarters in Los Angeles was attacked by police. For nearly five hours 18 Panther men and women on December 8 held out against some 300 cops, supported by armoured equipment, automatic weapons, tear gas, with an armed helicopter hovering over the scene.

Wide Support

The Panther contingent decided to hold out until witnesses and journalists could be summoned to view their surrender. Otherwise, believe the Panthers, they would have all been murdered by the cops.

The police arrested the 18 when a public surrender was arranged through Panther-placed telephone calls to newspapers and friendly individuals. The police have charged the Panthers with possession of illegal and deadly weapons. But neighbours of the Panther headquarters say they saw police officials bring a cache of weapons into the building half an hour after the 18 Panthers had been taken away.

The 18 Panthers in jail are. Deputy Defence Minister Geronimo, 27, who is held on \$165,000 bail, Melvin Smith 41, no bail set, Robert Bryan, 23, held without bail, Tommye Williams, 19, no bail, George Young, 22, held on \$25,000 bail, Willie Safford, 19, held without bail, Bernard Smith, 17, no bail, Paul Redd, 19, held without bail, Renee Moore, 19, no bail, Gilbert Parke, 19, no bail, Isiah Houston, 23, no bail, Sharon Williams, 20, \$12,500 bail, Craig Williams 19, held on \$12,500 bail; Wayne Pharr, 19, being held without bail set.

Also jailed are Lloyd Mims, 19, without bail, Jackie Johnson,

20, no bail, Sandra Pratt, 20, \$62,500 bail, and Roland Ereman, 22, held without bail.

The blows aimed at the Panthers have had the effect of rallying support to the organization that has become enemy number one to the government of repression. Among the organizations supporting the Los Angeles Panther prisoners are the American Parents Council, the Black Student Union, Operation Bread Basket, the Urban League, CORE, the Crenshaw Neighbours Organization, the Black Student Alliance, SCLC, the Che Lumumba Club, the Malcolm X Foundation, and the NAACP.

On December 20, a special commission of black Congressmen convened in Chicago to investigate the assassinations of Panther leaders Hampton and Clark by police. Headed by Representative Charles Diggs (D-Mich), the commission included Representative Adam Clayton Powell (D-N Y), Representative Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), and Representative John Conyers (D-Mich).

Professor Herbert Reid of the Harvard Law School, served as counsel to the commission that took testimony from Panther Deputy Defence Minister Bobby Rush and other concerned persons.

The Congressmen were taken to Hampton's apartment on the West Side to inspect the premises. Referring to the murder scene, Representative Diggs remarked, "I have never in my life seen such a sight."

Panther chief of staff Dave Hilliard said his organization welcomed the support of all concerned parties and organizations, black and white, radical and moderate.

A spokesman of the Black Panther Party said in New York: "We say to the black representatives and to all concerned people, that they must put their words into practice or go down in history with those who perpetuate the Big Lie. The Big Lie is the one that this country was based on, and it is the Big Lie that causes all of the fascist repression on black and other oppressed people in this country."

Nigeria and National Question

TUNJI OTEGBEYE

Dr Otegbeye is a well-known Marxist intellectual from Nigeria. This article, written in September 1969, is of topical relevance in view of the recent dramatic developments in Nigeria

WHAT is a nation? How does the National Question develop?

These are questions which we must answer before we go on to spell out the manifestation of the national question and its possible solution in Nigeria.

"A nation is a historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life and psychological make up manifested in a community of culture" — Joseph Stalin

From the above definition it is clear that there were no nations in Nigeria before the advent of the colonial powers.

What then was the state of affairs?

Nigeria was not an entity. The land mass now known as Nigeria was occupied by several ethnic groups or tribes in different stages of socio-economic formations.

In the North was the Fulani Empire with large Emirates, with developed, feudal, governmental machinery. The Fulani-Hausa ruling circles had overrun the greater part of the Middlebelt area of Nigeria reaching as far South as Offa. Their representatives were installed to rule the different Emirates. The Fulani Empire was in a state of disintegration.

This time also witnessed the disintegration of a former, powerful Empire—the Yoruba Empire—which was centred around Ife and Oyo and extending to Benin in the Mid-West, Lagos in the South and Ilorin and Kabba Division in the North. The intertribal wars of Oyos versus Ibadans, Ijebus versus Egbas, Egbas versus Egbados, etc. etc., had left the Yoruba in utter disunity and made them vulnerable to conquest by external forces.

In the East, apart from the Onitsha, Opobo and Calabar dynasties, feudalism was in its infancy. The general picture was one of primitive communal, semi-slave society which was breaking up to yield place to the feudal system.

From these historical data, it is obvious that Nations were not yet formed in Nigeria before the advent of the British. At best we can refer to the Hausas, Yorubas, Benins, Kanuris etc., as having developed into nationalities while most of the other groups were still at tribal or even clan level.

Unlike the development that took place in Europe in the 16th and 17th century resulting in the break-

down of old feudal empires and the rise of nation-states under the impact of capitalism, on the socio-economic formations in Nigeria, was superimposed the influence of foreign monopoly capital. The semi-primitive communal, semi-slave and semi-feudal culture fell under the heavy influence of capitalism.

The road to the formation of nation-states was halted and in its place was the colonial experiment of arbitrarily forcing people within specified areas together to form a multinational state which we now know as Nigeria.

Nigeria became an administrative division of British imperialist interest in Africa. Much of the subdivision in the form of constitutions was to enhance effective administration for colonial exploitation rather than to help the nations and nationalities to develop to form a virile state.

Between 1900 and 1914 the Northern Provinces and Southern Provinces of Nigeria were run as a loose federation or confederation. This laid the basis of the uneven development between the South and the North which is a deliberate attempt of British imperialism to create two societies with deep seated contradictions—a feudal, rather backward looking North, and a capitalistic, relatively progressive, forward looking South. This built-in disparity is the basis that bedeviled the politics of the First Republic and is even now reflected in the status quo in the army, the civil service and even the poor performances of the intellectuals on the proposed indigene students scheme.

In 1914, the amalgamation of the North and the South took place and a unitary form of government was imposed in the form of Nigeria Order-in-Council better known as Hugh Clifford Constitution—1922.

The Hugh Clifford constitution remained in force until 1946 when the Richards constitution was imposed on Nigeria, this time with minimal consultation with a few Nigerians who are well known collaborators with the British colonialists.

The Richards constitution divided Nigeria into three Regions—North, West and East. Each Region had a bicameral legislature in the pattern of the House of Lords and the House of Commons in Britain.

The Richards constitution gave way to the Macpherson constitution which made Lagos a Federal

MAINSTREAM

territory and gave the Regions semi-autonomous powers. This is basically the constitution for independence on October 1, 1960.

The era of Colonialism from 1900 to 1946, also witnessed the imposition of the capitalist, the bourgeois ideology of the ruling colonialists on the socio-economic formations in Nigeria. The influence of finance capital over the Feudal, Semi-Slave, semi-primitive societies grew by leap and bound.

By the late thirties and early forties Nigeria had budding capitalists, professional groups and intellectuals who were wedded to the capitalist ideology and the bourgeois conception of democracy.

With the subtle growth of capitalism and the growing adherence to capitalist ideology, nationalism—call it tribalism or accentuated “clannism”—became a prominent feature in public life.

Tribal organisations grew in numerical strength and influence. The Feudal boundaries and clan boundaries were socially dissolved yielding place to free enterprises and the migration of peasants, school leavers to large cities in quest of work.

The growth of consciousness among the different nationalities gave rise to demands for regions which were essentially based on the major ethnic groupings, the Hausas in the North, the Ibos in the East and the Yorubas in the West. The Richards constitution of 1946 was a reflection of this growing consciousness of the nationalities and tribes in Nigeria.

One significant result of the Richards constitution was that it provided a measure of stability for the nationalities—particularly the largest one by creating autonomous Regions which provided the administrative and economic cohesion for the tribes and nationalities, all of which developed to be nations. Thus under the Macpherson constitution Regional autonomy was more entrenched in response to the wishes of the major ethnic groupings.

It is therefore clear that with the development of capitalism economic disunity of the tribes and nationalities which was prevalent in the Feudal Society was gradually eliminated and a single market emerged as a result of which nationalities and tribes grew into Nations. “Nations” wrote Lenin, “are an inevitable product, and inevitable form, in bourgeois epoch of social development.”

This is the law of social development.

The rising tide of nationalism led to the formation of the Ibo State Union, the Egbe Omo Oduduwa, the Ibibio State Union, and the Jami'yyar-Mutane-Arewa.

Nationalism in the fifties and late forties played a progressive role in uniting into a common front the major ethnic groupings.

In the historical setting therefore, nationalism of the fifties called for unity and brotherhood among the national groups—an end to internal hostility and the building of a national culture—as part and parcel of the general struggle against colonialism.

Thus both the speeches of Dr Azikiwe and the pronouncement of Chief Awolowo represented this progressive trend of that time which was in accord with the popular wishes of our population.

But bourgeois nations reflecting bourgeois nationalism also have a negative aspect in that the

rivalries between the bourgeoisie of the different nations become intensified and what is now referred to as tribalism develops. The struggle for one nation to dominate the other becomes an external factor. Thus the comment of Ibrahim Imam on the quoted section of Zik's Presidential Address to Ibo State Union—“It would appear that the God of Africa has created the Ibo nation to lead the children of Africa from the bondage of ages. The Ibo nation cannot shirk its responsibility from its manifest destiny”. The Sardauna of Sokoto's assertion that the Fulani/Hausa hegemony would march from the North to the Sea represented a threat of the domination of one group by the other inherent in acute international rivalries of the bourgeois nations. Chief Awolowo's Egbe Omo Oduduwa was equally the Yoruba answer to Hausa or Ibo domination.

Stalin in his works on the national question wrote, “The bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation, repressed on every hands, is naturally started into movement. It appeals to its ‘native folk’ and begins to cry out about the ‘fatherland’, claiming that its own cause is the cause of the nation as a whole. It recruits itself an army among its ‘Countrymen’, in the interest of ‘the fatherland’. Nor do the folk always remain unresponsive to its appeals, they rally round its banner: the repression from above affects them also and provoke their discontent. Thus the national movements begin.”

Side by side with the development of acute rivalry among the three large ethnic groups grew the movement for self determination for the neglected minority ethnic groups who were daily oppressed by measures taken by the domineering ethnic groups.

Class View on National Question

The Tivs united the minority elements in the Middle-Belt of Northern Region to form the United Middle Belt Congress to demand the Middle Belt State. The Kanuris and Shua Arabs of Bornu Province launched the Bornu Youth Movement for Bornu State and the Ilorin and Kabba Divisions launched the Talaka Parapo Movement demanding a merger with their kith and kin in Western Nigeria.

In the West, the struggle of the minority ethnic groups took the shape of the Mid-West State Movement which culminated in the formation of the fourth region—the Mid-West-Region.

In the East the Calabar-Ogoja-Rivers State Movement and the Niger Congress grew as a challenge to national oppression by the dominant ethnic group.

In the later aspect of the Colonial era and during the life of the First Republic we can pinpoint two forms of Nationalism. The first is the reactionary Nationalism—call it National chauvinism—of the three dominant nations—the Hausas, Yoruba and Ibos, not only to dominate the minorities in their regions of origin but also to dominate the politics of the Federation. The Second is the progressive Nationalism of the oppressed nations like the Tivs, Kanuris, Benins, Urhobos, Ijaws, Efiks, Ogojans etc., who were struggling for national liberation and equality of opportunity. This second form of nationalism became a corner-stone of anti-imperialist

movement in the colonial era since the colonial machinery was used to prop up the declining power of the feudal lords particularly in the North.

But we must realise that social life changes from time to time and with it changes the National Question.

Different classes have different views on the national question. As such the national question serves different interest and assumes different shades, according to which class raises it

For example, the Feudal Monarchist nationalism of the Georgian nobility to liberate Georgia from Russian tutelage, had the sole aim of placing Georgian Kings and Georgian nobility at the head of Georgia and thus placing the destiny of Georgian people squarely in the hands of this ruling class. A parallel to this in Nigeria can be found in the NPC's slogan of North for Northerners and in the AG (Egbe-Omo-Oduduwa slogan for Yoruba solidarity. It was no accident that most of the NPC ruling circles were members of Feudal aristocracy or Alhajis, it was no accident that most AG members had to become Chiefs in order to fit into the class pattern that was already taking shape.

Bourgeois nationalism aims at maintaining a monopoly of the home market and where applicable colonial market, for example, British, German, French Nationalism, for example, to fence home market with a tariff wall, to drive foreign bourgeoisie from the market by force and then to artificially raise prices by means of some "patriotic" tricks

A reflection of this destructive bourgeois approach is evident in the slogans that led to the pogrom in the Northern States and to secession in the East Central State. The catalogue of events shows clearly the effort of the ruling Federation, retracting into their regions of origin to protect their class interests.

Political Parties and National Question

Political Parties came into existence in the early colonial days. The National Democratic Party of Herbert Macaulay, the Nigerian Youth Movement and latter the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons represented alliance of workers, intellectuals and budding bourgeoisie of Nigeria. They were all Nigerian in outlook and in their own ways were opposed to colonialism.

But by the end of the forties and the beginning of the fifties, nationalism has become a strong factor in Nigerian politics. The Nigerian Youth Movement was decadent having become the tool of the compradore bourgeoisie of Nigeria. The NCNC had shifted from its Nigerian wide outlook and had become the tool of Ibo bourgeoisie. The action group came up as the tool of the Yoruba ruling group of Feudal, Compradore and National bourgeoisie alliance and the NPC as the representative of the Feudal Aristocracy of Northern Nigeria.

The significant factor to note was that at the time of independence, there was no political party that had a country wide support or an ideology that could unite the different nations and nationalities of the Federation of Nigeria.

It was in 1963, August that the first party based

on the workers, peasants and progressive intellectuals was founded. As such the Socialist Workers and Farmers Party became the first Party with a uniting ideology—a Nigerian wide patriotic stand and a progressive world outlook.

Political activities therefore tended to sharpen the differences between the nations and nationalities, for example, if there was a squabble between the NCNC and the AG, it soon deteriorated into an Ibo versus Yoruba Affair.

The rivalries among the political parties also resulted in the struggle of the three major nations in trying to seize the state machinery or striving to effect an alliance with a weaker group in order to control the Federal Government machinery. Such were the conditions that led to the alliance of the NCNC/NEPU and the NPC leaving the Yoruba bourgeoisie in the cold. This same condition led to the polarisation in the AG leading the formation of the NNDP of Chief Akintola which used its class position to undermine the NCNC/NPC relations and brought the Yoruba Feudalists and Bourgeoisie to share in the chop-chop machinery at the federal level.

January 15 Coup and National Question

The January 15, 1966 Coup was motivated by patriotic intentions of the young majors who carried out the coup. The army take-over put an end to a corrupt, nepotistic and neo-fascist rule of the Feudal and Compradore classes who have guided the fortune of the Federation since independence. It gave a new ray of hope to our people.

But soon the light went dim, the forces of Ibo bourgeoisie using their strong position in the army officers corps, wanted to impose their own dictatorship on the Federation. First was the indiscrete promotion of a large number of Ibo Officers and then the Decree 34 which made Nigeria a country with a unitary constitution.

It was no difficulty for the imperialist forces of Britain who rely heavily on the support of the Balewa Government for their continued exploitation of Nigeria, to stir the fire of Ibo domination, and precipitate the pogrom and the July Coup. The British Neo-colonialists were hoping to restore the NPC/NNDP axis back into power.

The nation woke up on the fateful July morning to learn of the disappearance of the Ironsi regime and the emergence of the Gowon regime.

Instead of restoring the domination of the North Feudalists over the Federation, Gowon adopted a progressive and democratic stand which is reflection of his class position and national origin. He established a broadly based government which reflects the struggle of the different nations and nationalities for self-determination. By creating twelve states, he answered in part the aspiration of the minority groups for local autonomy, for freedom from national oppression by the larger nations. It made it look unlikely that any one single national group by a faked alliance can rise to dominate the Federation. It is of course a fact that the fear of domination by the North will not disappear until the so called

interim administration of the Northern States is abolished

First, it must be stressed that while the creation of twelve states has gone a long way to relieve the anxiety of many minority national groups, it has not given a completely satisfactory answer to the national question.

Some politicians have advocated the breaking of the North Eastern State into two states—the Kanuris of Bornu Province and the others. Such a suggestion may be justified on the basis that the minorities in Adamawa and Ahmadu Bello Provinces have been linked with political aspiration of the Middle Belters in the struggle for self-determination for smaller national groups.

Future Perspective

On the other hand the advocate of “split West into two or three” — and it does not appear as if the different groups can agree on any plausible boundary — are not guided by the national interests of the affected group or by any scientific evidence or historical precedence. For anybody to suggest that no state should have not less than five million people is not to understand the nature of the solution of national question in Nigeria, or even learnt from our past experience in this country. Some of the advocate of split the West are acting from purely selfish political motives. But it will not be enough to condemn their assertions and leave matters at that. Let us look into the experiences of other multinational states and in the first instance the shining example of the USSR in solving the National Question.

The USSR is a sixth of the earth's land mass with a population of about 250,000,000. In order to guarantee the right of self-determination the USSR is divided into Union Republics some of which have autonomous republics, autonomous regions and autonomous districts or national areas according to the national groups inhabiting each Union Republic.

There are two chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR—the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities. Both chambers have equal rights. The election to the Soviet of Unions is one member for 300,000 voters. The Soviet of Nationalities is elected to represent the Union Republics, autonomous republics, autonomous regions and national areas. Regardless of the number of its population, each union republic—whether the vast Russian Federation whose population is 125,700,000 (as of January 1, 1965) or Estonia with a population of 1,200,000—elects 25 members to the Soviet of Nationalities. Similarly each autonomous republic elects 11 members, each autonomous region five members and each national area one member to the Soviet of Nationalities. In this way the smallest national groups are fully represented in the highest Legislature of the State. More than that each autonomous area representing minority national groups is given local autonomy in the running of its affairs.

It is my candid opinion that the example of the USSR can be of great value to us in Nigeria in

finding a solution to the plight of minority national groups. We certainly do not have to split every state up to national state or take a razor and cut through the map of Nigeria on a strict—not more than five million basis.

We, of course, must not lose sight of the fact that the Soviet people are linked not only by the constitution, but also by glorious Communist Party of the Soviet Union which stands firmly on the principle of proletarian internationalism.

The formation of nations, the development of nationalism, are inevitable product in the bourgeois epoch of social development. The historical legitimacy of national movements is fully recognised by Marxists. But it is important that we do not allow this recognition to become an apology for nationalism. Nationalism must be strictly limited to what is progressive in these movements so that this recognition may not lead to the obscuring of proletarian consciousness by bourgeois ideology.

There is no doubt that the emergence of parties based on each large national group was in the main, responsible for the crisis of the First Republic.

It is therefore essential that political parties, trade unions, youth, women, farmers and professional organisations that will be allowed to operate in the New Nigeria must not only have a Nigerian wide outlook, they must be Nigerian Wide in content so that they do not degenerate into weapon of national chauvinism.

Easing Relations Between Nations

The Federal Government should from now educate the new generation in the spirit of one citizenship, one country, one destiny.

Sports and other cultural activities should be developed on a healthy, Nigerian wide basis, frequent exchanges of visits between states at all levels should be encouraged.

A planned economy should be established with a view to minimising uneven development.

A new breed of Nigerians who will uphold the positive and progressive aspect of nationalism and shun the reactionary and backward looking aspect will be the result of a progressive economic, educational and cultural development.

Nigeria needs a uniting and forward looking ideology that can wed all the nations into one patriotic whole. Such an ideology is Socialism.

Theoretically the final solution of the national question cannot come under capitalism. Capitalist Society, based on private property and the exploitation of man by man and nation by nation, creates discord among nations.

Only socialism, by abolishing exploitation and class antagonism, can put an end to national discord and ensure genuine progress, mutual confidence and the drawing together of nations. “In proportion as the exploitation of one individual by another is put an end to”, Marx and Engels wrote in the Communist Manifesto, “the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put to an end. In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility of one nation to another will

come to an end "

The working class principled stand is for the friendship of all nations. This is summed up in the slogan—Workers of the World unite. This is proletarian internationalism, the Community of interest of all working people of all nations and all climes.

In considering secession in Nigeria, Marxists-Leninists must consider the effect of such a move on Africa, on Nigeria itself. Further they must pay attention to the content of the secession and the internal and external motivating factors.

Every country in Africa, as a result of colonial heritage, has acute national questions to solve. It is well known that the imperialists have worked up reactionary nationalism in Congo Kinshasa—(Kautanga), in Uganda and Kenya to split these countries. The Biafra experiment would have been a justification for intensifying this line of action which would lead to more mushroom States which can easily be kept as neo-colonial puppet states. Secondly the energy which would have been spent in consolidating the anti-imperialist front would now be spent in fratricidal national struggles. Either way the imperialists stand to gain.

The strongest case put forward by supporters of secession is that the "Biafrans" should have a right to self-determination including secession.

In answering those who hold this view we have to point out that the Eastern Region of Nigeria is occupied by the Ibos who number over seven million people (1965 census), the Efiks, 3.5 million, Ogojans 0.8 million and the Ijaws 1.5 million, that the petroleum and the rich agricultural areas were in the minority areas, that even under colonialism and after political independence the minority national groups have always struggled for self-determination but their efforts were thwarted by the ruling Ibo bourgeoisie who controlled the regional government and had a strong influence in the Federal Government.

Therefore it is important to realise that the Ibo bourgeoisie secessionists after the pogrom in the Northern States decided to set up a Biafra without any mandate from the people and certainly against the aspiration of the minority groups in the area for a right to self-determination, in order to found a new State dominated by the Ibo bourgeoisie. The sported administration of the secessionists in the minority areas show clearly an effort to dominate the minority national groups and their rich natural resources.

In this venture the secessionists had the support of the USA, France, West Germany, Portugal, South Africa, Vatican, some independent African States, and the Mao Tse-tung clique.

We must not lose sight of the fact that contradictions among the imperialist circles also has its effect on the secessions. The USA and French imperialists wanted to seize the rich oil depot of Nigeria from Britain. The secessionists became a pawn on the chess board of the imperialists.

Besides, the Nigerian Marxist-Leninists holds the view that it is only a united Nigeria that will be able to fight effectively against foreign exploitation, for economic independence. Realising that Africa has

been split into small states—over thirty of these states are under five million—it becomes imperative to keep Nigeria united and to develop its potentialities for the furtherance of the African revolution.

In his work, "Critical Remarks on the National Question", Lenin stressed that the right of nations, to self-determination should not be confused with the advisability of secession. He emphasised that, "*While and in so far as, different nations constitute a single state, Marxist will never, under any circumstances, advocate either the Federal principle or decentralisation. The great centralised state is a tremendous historical step forward from medieval disunity to the future socialist unity of the whole world.*"

The creation of twelve states by the Federal Military Government of Nigeria provides real conditions for the exercise of the right to self-determination. The former Eastern Region of Nigeria now consists of three states, which accords with Lenin's teaching—"the need for local self government with autonomy for regions having special economic and social considerations, a distinct, national composition of the population and so forth, democratic centralism necessarily demand both" (Collected Works of Lenin, Vol 20, p 46 English Edition, Moscow 1964).

In the light of Marxist-Leninist exposition which has been justified by history and the example of USSR, the claim of the bourgeois secessionists of the Eastern Region of Nigeria to self-determination and secession cannot be justified.

We would like to stress that the struggle to keep Nigeria united is a struggle against imperialism, a contribution to the cause of national liberation and full independence. As such we have cause to thank all the anti-imperialist forces which have given moral and material support to this struggle. More especially we thank the CPSU and the entire Soviet people for an objective appraisal of the Nigerian situation and their positive stand against imperialism.

In Nigeria progressive groups are debating the immediate possibility of a united front of all-anti-imperialist forces for the struggle for economic independence and democracy. Some groups see this move as the emergence of a new party like the CPP of Ghana or Sudanese Union of Mali or Socialist Union of UAR.

The Marxist-Leninists of Nigeria believe in the revival of their Party after the lifting of the ban on political parties, the need for the leading role of the working class in alliance with the peasantry, and the leading role of the Party of a new type—the party of Communists who can guide with scientific tool of Marxism-Leninism the development of the national democratic revolution, and its transformation into a socialist revolution.

Indeed "the existing situation demands united action of Communists and all other anti-imperialist forces so that maximum use may be made of the mounting possibilities for a broader offensive against imperialism, against the forces of reaction and war."

(Tasks at the present stage of the struggle against imperialism and united action of the Communist and Workers Parties and all anti-imperialist forces—Moscow meeting 1969)

PRESS C N CHITTA RANJAN (Continued from page 37)

and Parliament should think in terms of again putting up the price page schedule which the Supreme Court had once struck down. At the time the working journalists were not entirely satisfied with the way the case for a price-page schedule was presented to the Court, although it cannot be said with any degree of certainty that the outcome would have been different if it had been effectively presented.

The view that freedom of expression is somehow adversely affected if the price of the newspaper is related to the number of pages, is obviously untenable and has to be challenged. One has only to see what use the big newspapers make of the number of pages at their disposal.

What is defended is not freedom of expression but the freedom to corner advertisements, thus, making sure of revenue and sell the product below cost price

if need be. It is no secret that many of these newspapers devote far less space to news than to advertisements, and even the news columns are broken into by propaganda material in favour of the owners.

Another question that has to be taken up seriously is the limiting of space devoted to advertising, the Press Commission's recommendation of 40 per cent is quite reasonable, for, it will, on the one hand, ensure the financial viability of the newspaper and, on the other, ensure that the reader is not cheated out of value in the shape of hard news for the money he pays.

Other steps Government can take to change the balance in favour of the small and medium newspapers is to see that in terms of money (not in terms of space, for the big newspapers charge heavy rates) the amount spent on advertising by the Govern-

ment is distributed evenly among all newspapers in the country.

The proposed Finance Corporation to help small and struggling newspapers is a step in the right direction. But, as the Indian Federation of Working Journalists has demanded, its scope should cover new newspapers which journalists and others might like to start on a cooperative basis. The aim should be to curb the growth of the monopoly Press and at the same time enable more and more newspapers to come up in different centres all over the land.

If Parliament and the Government act purposefully, with the willing cooperation of working journalists and other newspaper employees, the Seventies can well mark the beginnings of a Press commensurate with the vast and growing needs of democratic, republican India.

MANCHESTER LETTER (Continued from page 54)

so that Government and Big Business could strike an equilibrium of *Panch Shil*?

Our socialists must reconsider their socialism. It is not enough to ask for the expansion of public sector. It is not enough for the Government to act as an arbiter between private capital and public welfare; the *Panch Shil* must break.

So long as the public and private sectors exist side by side, one is bound to corrupt the other. And "Oriental Despotism" will have no trouble in mouthing radical, socialist, slogans—no matter

if a fairy or a Caliban occupies the helm of affairs.

Postscript: Perhaps the most interesting analysis of the Indian situation I heard was that of a social anthropologist. According to him, Indian politics is experiencing the process of double alienation: one is that the state apparatus is no longer interdependent on the country's economy. In other words it is not a superstructure, but independent and existing for itself.

At the same time, it is powerless or unwilling to change the power structure which is domina-

ted by wealth, caste and even sheer anti-social greed.

The second alienation comes when such a state mouths radical slogans for it knows, while doing so, it does not run the danger of implementing such slogans. For to do so again according to him would mean changing the very basis of state apparatus itself.

All this made me rather confused. For consolation I read out Karunakaran's "Indian Political System" in *Mainstream* to a group of Indian students. Surprisingly, they agreed with his conclusions!

SOLDIERS AGAINST WAR (Continued from page 63)

But the new guidelines, despite their apparent liberalism, leave intact the multiple and varied possibilities of prosecution under the Uniform Code of Military Justice through the application of articles prohibiting "acts prejudicial to good order and discipline", "uttering disloyal statements", "provoking speech or gestures", "soliciting mutiny and sedition", "disrespect toward superior commissioned officers", etc.

Andy Stapp, chairman of the American Servicemen's Union, summed up as follows the significance of the Pentagon's new guidelines: "While in some ways the directive was drawn up simply to standardize and centralize repression, it is an important concession for the ruling class to admit that the rebellion in the ranks is growing" (New York *Guardian*, September 27, 1969).

While American imperialism,

in its determination to halt the advance of socialism and impose its own economic and political sway, continues to spread death and destruction in Vietnam and elsewhere, the emergence of a politically articulate opposition inside the armed forces marks a new step in the development of a domestic force potentially capable of eventually undermining the war-making capacity of the most powerful killing machine in the world.

WHO CONTROLS UN "MACHINE" (Continued from page 21)

ship (often they act like rival governments) pay insufficient attention to local conditions in individual countries. The international civil servant more often than not concerns himself with abstract notions far removed from reality. Equally, the developing countries with their own limitations in providing funds, building or personnel, have made the operational burden quite heavy.

Some minor ills can be cured by simple procedures, but the lack of a centralized system of control and planning—called by the Jackson Report the "brain"—requires a new approach. Sir Robert has called it the UN Development Co-operation Cycle (UNDECC). It has five phases: the country programme and annual review, formulation and appraisal of projects, implementation; evaluation, and follow-up. The cycle is a continuing one in which all the individual phases are interdependent. The crucial stage in the process and what may be called a major departure from current practice is country programming. According to the proposal, the UN assistance must be provided within the framework of a Country Programme which will be drawn up by the

UN Resident Representative in consultation with the government. This programme would be based on needs and priorities of the national development plan and would ideally cover the same period. The main theme of the Report is that the centre of gravity should be shifted from New York to the developing world.

The attempt by the Jackson Report in proposing a grand strategy for the entire multilateral system is bound to be resisted. The Report is addressed to all the three sides of the triangle: the UN hierarchy, the developed and the developing nations. Within the UN and its agencies, the reaction has varied from one extreme to another. The Agencies have labelled the Capacity Study with all sorts of epithets, from "highly insulting" to just "interesting".

The developed countries on the other hand seem to be more receptive. As far as the super-powers are concerned, the timing of the Report fits well with their present mood. Both Washington and Moscow have taken it well. Britain appears to be pleased with the conclusions of the Report, as her representatives can now eloquently point out that they knew all the time how inefficient

the UN system was. France will take its own time to pronounce her verdict. Meanwhile, in Swiss Parliament the capacity study has been cited to support the view that the UN system requires structural changes.

The developing countries, who have long been manipulated by the "donors" have yet to record what measures they are prepared to take to improve the system. After all, they would be the real beneficiaries. Certain countries like Ghana and UAR have welcomed the recommendations. But it is surprising to note the negative tone in which the Indian representatives have viewed it. India is an important beneficiary of the UN Development Technical Assistance, and one wonders what it has to lose by a positive approach.

It is not often recognised that United Nations is what its government-members make of it. Therefore, it follows that the Jackson Report has thrown the ball back into the court of the governments. Now it is for them to take the initiative. It is necessary for a country like India to carefully study the entire question, keeping in view both the long-range and the short-term interest of the country.

OIL POLICY? (Continued from page 24)

If the delivered price of domestic coke per tonne is about Rs 150, it should be able to compete with kerosene priced at Rs 400 per tonne.

Kerosene's calorific value is twice as much as that of coke. It is also clean to handle and convenient to store. As against this, there is, of course, the claim of some fuel scientists that the heat derived from coke for cooking is the cheapest when efficiency of utilisation is taken into consideration. However, it can be presumed that coke will be saleable only when its per-ton delivered price is not more than one-third of the same for kerosene.

There was a time when, under the leadership of the late Dr J.C. Ghosh, studies were made of the low-temperature carbonisation (LTC) of coal. The LTC industry was visualized as the starting point for the production of cheap thermal power, fuel gas, synthesis gas for ammonia, and synthetic petrol, besides diesel oil, waxes and a variety of chemicals. This was a step in the right direction. Unfortunately the success of oil exploration at Cambay, although in itself a milestone on the road to progress, and the high investment requirement of LTC plant, put the country off the track. With the demise of Dr J.C.

Ghosh the projects also were buried. They need to be exhumed now.

In addition to the more advanced process of fluidized carbonisation there are other developments in the coal world which should revive our interest in it. In USA, the home of oil and gas, coal is poised for a new breakthrough as a source of synthetic oil and feed for chemicals.

To sum up: Hydrocracking for middle distillates, partial oxidation of residues, coal-based ammonia, and carbonisation of coal are woven into an integrated pattern of energy and feed. In this scheme, the refinery is seen not merely as an energy producer. Apart from meeting the requirements of fuel for land, sea and air transport and tubes for machinery, it will make utmost contribution to agriculture, on which depends the country's economic and social progress in all its forms.

The policy for controlling the demands as also the pattern of supply of the refinery products is, however, the easier aspect of oil policy. The more basic and the more challenging aspect is the policy for exploration of oil and production of synthetic crude which would be covered in another article.

determines their beings but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness

"At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or—what is but a legal expression of the same thing—with the property relations within which they have been at work hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution."

Active Economy

Objectively, India's economy, from being a stagnant one under imperialist rule, has become an active economy. Its growth in terms of the rise in industrial production, agriculture and per capita income, measured by the indices that are available, is not insignificant. Any analysis that does not take into account this growth or mistakes it for socialist progress because of the existence of a public sector, will not be objective.

The plans and policies drawn on the basis of a mixed economy have resulted in some growth, but because this is still based on exploitation, there has been the emergence of a well-defined capitalist class whose increase in riches has been conspicuous, a growth in the number of workers, and alongside of it an increase in the number of unemployed

The employed find that the increase in their emoluments does not keep pace with their needs. Though wages have increased, they have not kept pace with those that should correspond to the value produced by the labour power of the wage earners. We have to see why the fruits of this development have gone mainly to a few.

Marx showed by his brilliant analysis that the basis of capitalist exploitation is the appearance of labour-power as a commodity that can be bought and used, that

this commodity has the unique quality of being able to reproduce the cost of its production—what is required as socially necessary to maintain the labourer so that he can live and work—in much shorter time than the time during which he is put to work.

The struggle of the working class is the struggle to do away with this system in which what the labourer produces over and above what it costs society at that time to maintain him so that he can work, and this may be called "surplus value", is appropriated by the owners of means of production

The great contribution of Marx and Engels was that they found in "surplus value" the key to the understanding of capitalist production and, in the class of proletarians, the weapon, nurtured under Capitalism itself, to change that society. Classes and the class nature of society are objective facts, they are not the fanciful creation of the Marxists. Those who seek to perpetuate this system are the men who want the existence of classes to remain.

Class Antagonism

Far from perpetuating these classes and class antagonisms, the Marxists seek to do away with classes by eliminating exploitation altogether. They seek to do it not by pious or wishful declarations or by appeals to the exploiting classes to realise their social responsibilities. They point out the historic role of the proletariat in changing the relations of production.

Marx and Engels not only developed the theory of scientific socialism, but in their life time they were in touch with every democratic movement for change and they participated in them. They had a close contact with the 1848 Revolution in Germany, the Paris Commune of 1871 and the Spanish insurrection of 1873.

Raising aloft the banner of Marxism, by analysing the concrete situation in Russia and in the international working class

movement, Lenin brilliantly illustrated that Marxism was not a dogma but a guide to action, that participation by the proletariat in every movement for reform, with its own independent organisation, working out and putting forward the correct slogans for advancing the interests of other downtrodden sections like the peasantry, advanced the interest of the movement for socialism. He laid stress on the fact that the party of the proletariat should win over the other sections to the fight for socialism by showing that it is the only road to their freedom by patiently illustrating from the experience of these other sections themselves how and why some of the slogans that attracted them did not lead to their objectives, explaining to them where there real interest lay.

Historic Contribution

Lenin showed how necessary was the close alliance of the working class and the downtrodden peasantry. This is the historic contribution of Lenin to the world history of the struggle for socialism

I have touched only very briefly on some of the basic concepts of Marxism-Leninism to help focus the thoughts of many who desire socialism. Although what has been said above may be very elementary, it is well to remember that these are some basic ideas of scientific socialism, of socialist theory in action

The truth and validity of these ideas have to be brought home to the vast mass of people who have not reached degree of politicalisation, and this has to be done by the interpretation of their concrete experience in life

The real test of the proper understanding and utilisation of the legacy of Marxism-Leninism, of socialism, would be the success or otherwise of the Marxist-Leninists in winning over by their activity, wider sections of the people for a real and consistent revolutionary democracy and for socialism.

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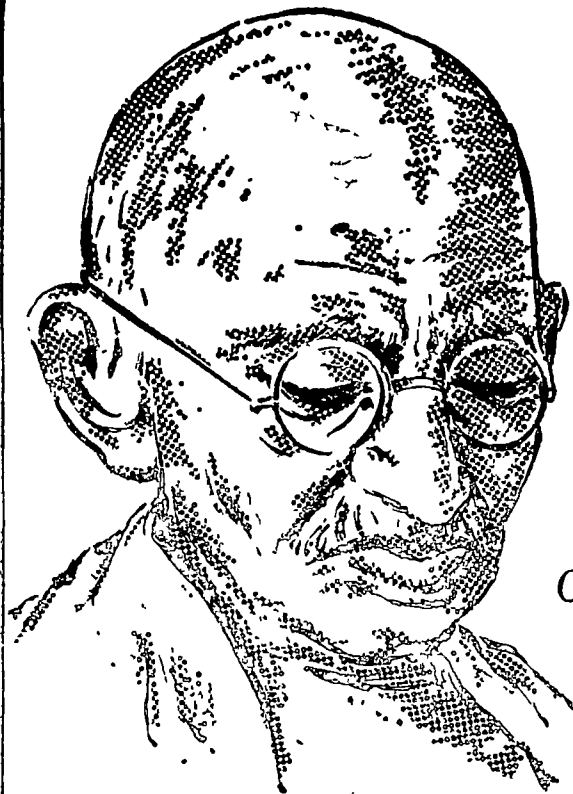
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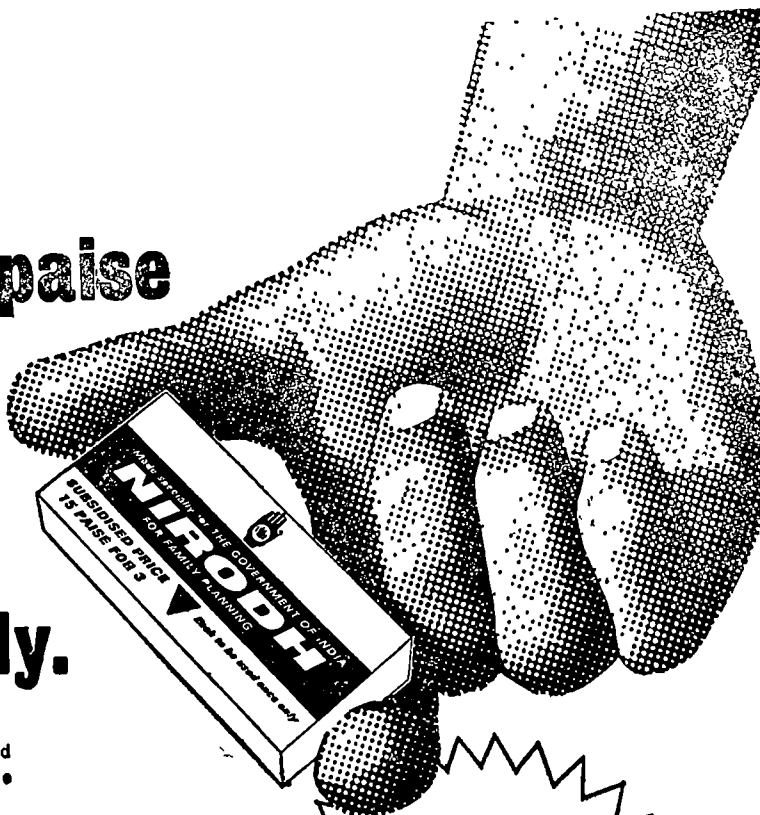
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Editorial

Salute to Crusader

BADSHAH Khan's four-month sojourn in India, all too brief, has nonetheless been of vital significance in that, like the Mahatma in earlier years, he made us look into ourselves and perceive the ugliness within, the pettiness and narrowness, the humbug and sham, and he made us look around us, too, and think of the vast and inhuman injustices we have allowed to be perpetrated in this secular democracy of ours, the poverty and misery we have allowed to flourish, the shameful inequalities and disparities we have failed to remove.

When Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan arrived, this country was reeling under the impact of the communal carnage in Ahmedabad and other cities and towns in Gujarat, and the reactionaries had mounted a new campaign against the nation's tested foreign policy on the strength of the Rabat affair. Mischievous propaganda was let loose about the shameful events in Gujarat which had for a time reduced the minority community to a state of panic, even individuals known for their dedicated service in the cause of communal harmony swallowed such propaganda and began referring to "provocation" by members of the minority community, this sounded like justification of the atrocious, inhuman and totally indefensible violence engineered by Hindu communal gangs. Throughout the fifties and the sixties the Hindu communalists had organized such riots in different parts of the country, but the Gujarat performance surpassed all that had gone before in terms of sheer cruelty and perversion. It was in this atmosphere that Badshah Khan came to our country with his message of mutual respect and tolerance, of the paramountcy of patriotism and national unity, of removal of poverty and inequality as the only viable basis for the building of a genuine secular socialist democracy. The common people of India naturally hailed him as in the past they used to rally round Mahatma Gandhi or Jawaharlal Nehru.

The Frontier Gandhi's visit has been of immense significance not merely because without fear or favour he held up the mirror to each of us, to him drunk with power as much as to him struggling to eke out a bare livelihood against heavy odds, to the man living in disgusting affluence as to the man not knowing whence his next meal would be forthcoming, but also because it symbolized the possibility of a new and healthier phase in the entire sub-continent made up of India and Pakistan. Badshah Khan is undoubtedly one of the most powerful representatives of

the democratic urge sweeping Pakistan today despite his self-imposed exile from the land of his birth. His contribution to the awakening among the Pakhtoon masses has been of extraordinary significance his abiding faith in the ultimate destiny of his countrymen is being vindicated step by step, with every change that comes over Pakistan. It seems increasingly clear that no power on earth can block the advance of the Pakistani people towards full-fledged democracy and towards the construction of a society based on justice and equality. Badshah Khan came here as the messenger conveying the tidings of these vast and dynamic changes, he came to make us see that in the final analysis the two nations which once were one, share a common destiny and will have to live as friends and good neighbours, forgetting the irritations and resentments of the present.

Whether the Khudai Khidmatgar organization he has helped set up takes effective shape or not, the nation's future depends on the leaders' and the people's capacity to imbibe his message and live up to it. The essence of the message is the weeding out of communal, caste and other barriers on the one hand, and the demolition of privilege based of wealth, position or birth. For the two are intertwined; one feeds the other and any struggle against one enjoins crusade against both.

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Chandigarh and Beyond

CHANDIGARH marks the first major political decision that Smt Indira Gandhi's Government has been able to take in the changed situation after the Congress split.

The entire controversy, however brings out the weakness in the style of functioning of the Government. For far too long, there has been dithering at the Centre over the issue.

In the first place, Chandigarh should have been named the capital of Punjab right at the time when Haryana was created. After that initial mistake, the Government bungled over the issue throughout, particularly since the publication of the Shah Commission Report. Actually it is this delay in solving the dispute which allowed Haryana to pile up its claims, one after the other, on the city.

When recently the final round of discussions at the Centre started, the Union Home Ministry prepared a number of alternatives, one of these which attracted the most attention and over it there were many discussions, was a rather extraordinary one: it envisaged the partition of Corbusier's city itself. Reliable circles, however, point out that the Home Ministry did not commit itself to any particular alternative, a rather eloquent commentary on the manner of functioning of the Government itself. While the Prime Minister was known to be personally in favour of keeping Chandigarh within Punjab, there was a stage in the discussions when the partitioning of the city was very much in the air. However, the idea somehow got scotched when it was found that such a decision

would be no solution at all, as it would surely be challenged by both sides.

An interesting interlude came when it was reported that the President in his personal capacity had suggested that the entire question could be left to the decision of Parliament. Had such a step been taken, there is little doubt that Chandigarh would have gone to Punjab but the step itself could have been paraded easily by all the parties as an example of the Government's total bankruptcy in coming to a decision. Fortunately it was not pursued.

ALTHOUGH the Prime Minister has repeatedly asserted that she would not give in to threats, there is little doubt that in the final round it was the fast and the threat of self-immolation by Sant Fateh Singh which bestirred the Government to take an immediate decision; there was little time for further dithering.

The point which has really helped the Sant to give up the fast was the fact that the city of Chandigarh has gone to Punjab. At the same time, the Centre has been rather anxious to maintain its posture of impartiality by making Punjab pay the price, and not to let Haryana having the feeling of being a defeated contestant. The acquisition of Fazilka is quite a substantial gain for Haryana in so far as this area fetches as much as Rs two crores per annum as revenue to the State.

Fazilka, however, has its own importance. The struggle over it has an interesting history. So

long as it was the meeting point between Punjab and the Ganganagar area of Rajasthan Ganganagar is a fertile area where the prosperous Sikh farmers have long been promised by Master Tara Singh that finally they would be brought into Punjab. This campaign has always been a danger point for the future as it may turn out to be a source of acrimony with Rajasthan. It is clear that the Centre wanted to remove this threat by pushing the Haryana frontier into Fazilka and thereby dislinking Punjab from Ganganagar.

Fazilka Tehsil, as it was previously demarcated, was a predominantly Hindi-speaking area, this was conceded in important official documents at the time of the late Pratap Singh Kairon. However, when the Akalis came to power, they actually redrew the map of the Tehsil in such a way that the contiguity of Fazilka with the Haryana border could be removed while another chunk from the neighbouring Punjab territory was added to the Tehsil to make it appear as predominantly Punjabi. It is to rectify this shrewd move of the Akali Ministry that the Central Government communique provided for the Hindi-speaking area of the Fazilka Tehsil, together with a small corridor taken out of the neighbouring Muktsar Tehsil, to be linked to Haryana.

Incidentally it may be noted that the Indo-Pak frontier along the Fazilka Tehsil is a notorious passage for smuggling in which a particular gang from Punjab has specialised. It will not be surprising if these smugglers finding themselves hard-hit, have

been taking a prominent part in the present Punjab campaign over the loss of Fazilka

This way the Central decision on Fazilka not only meant to mollify Haryana feelings but also to insure against any future Akali move to lay claims on Ganganagar on grounds of Ganganagar Sikhs' contiguity with Punjab

At a certain stage of the protracted talks there were reports that portions of rural Delhi would be given to Haryana. In fact, this was almost taken for granted when the Prime Minister met the Opposition leaders two days before the final decision. Basing on these calculations, Sri Brahm Prakash began to plan a spectacular come-back as one of the leading elements in future Haryana politics. This could have created problems for Sri Bansi Lal. However, Sri Brahm Prakash's plans were nullified when the Centre decided not to disturb the borders of any other State over this issue, except those of the two directly involved over the Chandigarh controversy, namely, Punjab and Haryana.

From all this it is clear that the final decision on Chandigarh and related issues had to be taken on essentially political grounds. This is a lesson which both the Government and all political parties can learn with profit. If the Chandigarh question had not been sent to the Shah Commission but judged on purely political considerations, much of the subsequent trouble could have been avoided. Judicial authorities approach such problems from a purely legal viewpoint without taking into account the overall political picture. It was the absence of this understanding which was the inherent weakness of the Shah Commission recommendations, a realisation which has come rather late in New Delhi.

THE violent aftermath of the Centre's decision on Chandigarh has been a thorough exposure of the Jana Sangh as a party without the least political scruple. While the RSS bands under the Jana Sangh auspices have been in the forefront in most of the disturbances in Haryana,



Politics of Treble Talk

the Punjab Jana Sangh unit's threat to launch a campaign for Fazilka has brought out how this party functions without any political principle; added to this, one has to note that the Jana Sanghis at Chandigarh want to keep the city as a separate entity.

The significance of the Jana Sangh's triple-faced stand is that in the present political climate in the country, any controversy over an issue like Chandigarh which has no social implications whatsoever, provides a happy hunting ground for parties like the Jana Sangh which want to cash in on any tension or confusion to whip up frenzy so that their real face as agents of the vested interests could be carefully hidden.

The Central authorities were not totally unprepared for this sort of development, as is shown by the elaborate posting of the army for prompt intervention—a refreshing contrast to the negligence shown by the Gujarat Government during the RSS-led communal violence in Ahmedabad last year. With all the frenzied efforts of the Jana Sangh—and the Syndicate stoking the fire—there is hardly any danger that Sri Bansi Lal will not be able to muster a majority in the Haryana Assembly, required for endorsing the Central Bill on Chandigarh.

However, the current disturbances in Haryana may in one

way strengthen Sri Bansi Lal's demand for more grants for the building of the new capital of Haryana, over and above the Rs 20 crores stipulated in the Central decision

THERE IS little doubt that the Prime Minister is anxious to see that Sri Bansi Lal's position is not undermined. This is because he has emerged as an important factor in the calculations of the Indira Congress. As a Jat leader, he has played no insignificant role in mobilising support for Smt Gandhi's camp.

In this context, a noticeable feature of Smt Gandhi's strategy in the battle against the Syndicate is to win over the Jat leaders. Not only Sri Bansi Lal, but more important, is the anxiety to bend backward to conquer Sri Charan Singh in UP. Similarly, Rajasthan's Jat leader, Sri Kumbharam Arya, is believed to have had important talks with Smt Gandhi. Sri Kumbharam Arya, who leads the BKD opposition in Rajasthan, has recently come to an understanding with Maharaja Karni Singh of Bikaner; the proof of which is to be seen in the Maharaja's readiness to join the kisan agitation which Sri Kumbharam is at present spearheading against the Sukhadia Ministry.

Bikaner's *entente* with Sri Arya may turn out to be the starting point of a Jat-Rajput axis in Rajasthan. This will no doubt spell danger for Sri Sukhadia, who has always cashed in on the antipathy between the Rajputs and the Jats. With his prestige already downgraded in the Congress hierarchy—there being no place for him in Sri Jagjivan Ram's Working Committee—Sri Sukhadia may very well be having sleepless nights with the new importance that the Jat lobby commands today in New Delhi.

POWER politics thus continues to be an absorbing game in New Delhi, although Smt Gandhi has to remember that her

stability in the final analysis has to depend on the strength of the mass support that she is able to retain.

It is in this context that her forthright speech before the joint meeting of the Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and the Millowners' Association at Ahmedabad ten days ago is more significant in terms of long-range political perspective. The sharpness with which she snubbed the tycoons has been reported only in a section of the Left-wing press, the giants among newspapers having preferred to underplay it.

While the speech itself makes a definite advance on the authoritative pronouncements from the Centre so far, one cannot help stressing, even at the risk of being repetitive, that the country will ultimately judge her not by the strong words used against Big Money, nor by the fine sentiments that she has been expressing in support of the underdog, but by the concrete action that she is prepared to take to break the ugly grip of the vested interests over the nation's economy.

February 3

N.C

is an upward revision for the public sector investment in the latest changes made.

The additions to the Central Plan include special allocations for correcting regional imbalances through schemes of special assistance to promote certain industries in the backward regions. It has now been decided to raise the Bokaro target to four million tonnes instead of the 1.7 million tonnes prescribed by the Draft Plan, and to further expand the capacity of the Bhilai steel plant, in view of the acute steel shortage feared during the current Plan period, as also to provide adequate orders for the heavy engineering complex at Ranchi.

ECONOMIC NOTEBOOK

Plan Approach Needs Change

SARAL PATRA

APPARENTLY, the Planning Commission has managed to shed its earlier reluctance to introduce any alteration in the Draft Fourth Plan. It has decided to increase the Plan size by Rs 457 crores, to an overall outlay of Rs 24,855 crores, and to enlarge the public sector outlay while reducing the allocation for the private sector.

The mark-up in the public sector outlay by Rs 1,481 crores to raise its share in the overall Plan to a total of Rs 15,871 crores has to be seen in the background of the recent Bombay Congress session pledges and the economic resolution.

Their impact is visible in the enlarged provision for assistance to small farmers under the State Plans, efforts to improve the lot of the dry farmers, and in the rural works to be sponsored under the Central schemes.

The cut in the private sector outlay, from Rs 10,000 crores in the Draft Plan to Rs 8,984 crores now, is mainly because the public sector has been entrusted with larger investments in

agriculture and rural electrification which were earlier credited to the private sector.

As the Planning Commission has made it known, in the rest of the fields allotted to the private sector, no change has been envisaged, and its outlay on organised industry and mining are assumed at the same level as in the Draft Plan.

Significant Change

A significant change has been made, thus, in altering the respective shares of the public and private sectors in the overall Plan. From the earlier roughly 59 per cent and 41 per cent allocated to the public and private sectors, respectively, their shares have now been changed to roughly 64 per cent and 36 per cent in the total outlay.

It is significant because of the changes in the ratio of investments in the public and private sectors. In the Third Plan, the ratio stood at 61 : 39 but was brought down to the level of 55 : 45 in the Draft Plan. There

The Central Plan now includes allocations for petro-chemical industries in Assam, redeeming the Prime Minister's pledge, a new scooter plant, additional public sector capacity in cement and paper, a second cable factory, and accelerated development of coal and copper mining.

Obviously, there has been a reassessment of the resources which has largely been able to wear down the resistance of the Planning Commission to effect any alteration in the Draft. The Commission had earlier held the view that bank nationalisation could not substantially aid public sector development plans.

The authors of the Draft Fourth Plan had made it known that they would not think of using the funds available from the nationalised banks for the Plan purposes. They were, apparently, convinced that the nationalised banks would hardly be able to hold their ground, leave aside prosper. But the turn of events have proved them totally wrong. The custodians of these banks are now hopeful that the deposits would double by the next two years.

However, it is also obvious that the resources of the magnitude required for the enlarged public sector outlay will call for sustained budgetary support throughout the Plan period. In other words, all the Central Budgets till 1974 must be geared

Resources Reassessed

to mobilising resources, supplemented by the State budgets.

The upward revision of the Plan outlay just before the Budget session of Parliament is probably indicative of the Government's determination to avoid dragging its feet.

The Budget for 1970-71 is, therefore, certain to contain a good dose of direct and indirect taxes. Coming as it does after the Bombay Congress session, it would also be expected that in the sphere of indirect taxation, those commodities which make for conspicuous consumption, would bear the main brunt of it while marginal relaxations in case of the daily needs of common people might not be totally absent.

The difficulty would perhaps arise in case of the State budgets. As it is, there has been a marked reluctance on the part of several State Governments to raise additional resources. A part of the resources for the enlarged State Plans has to be provided through the efforts of the respective State Governments.

Agricultural Income-tax

Not that they do not have the necessary avenues for raising additional resources. For instance, some of the State Governments which have decided to exempt land revenue from small holdings, would do well to explore the possibility of levying agricultural income-tax on prosperous farms on a graded scale.

If political considerations are not allowed to stand in the way, this is the most feasible proposition justified by the current trends in the economy. The fifth Finance Commission itself had urged the States to devote serious thought to this proposal to augment their revenues.

The States need to raise additional resources also because the enlarged State Plans are not to be financed by the Centre, which will stick to its assistance of Rs 3,500 crores as fixed earlier. The increases will have to be met by the States themselves, in parts from the additional sums accruing to them as a result of the fifth Finance Commission award.

To that extent, the States are

expected to be unhappy. Most of them have been under the impression that the bonanza from the Finance Commission would be entirely at their disposal without any constraint from an outside agency, and would enable them to tide over immediate adverse situations.

Allocation of these funds for the enlarged Fourth Plan purposes would obviously preclude their use for any non-Plan expenditure which make a heavy draft on the finances of almost every State.

Glaring Shortcomings

However, the upward revision of the Plan size, including the enlargement of the public sector outlay, *does not* in any way alter the basic approach of the Draft Plan. Its aim to increase national income at the rate of 5.5 per cent every year and the per capita income by about 3 per cent per annum, remain unchanged, as also the 4.5 per cent annual rise in agricultural output and 8 to 9 per cent in industrial production.

Despite the latest exercise, the Fourth Plan Draft will be retained in all its essentials, notwithstanding the fact that the situation when it was framed does not exist any more. Also, there has been no attempt even now to remove some of the glaring shortcomings of the Draft Fourth Plan—for example, the absence of a co-ordinated programme to combat unemployment.

The Draft Plan document has excused itself from attempting any assessment of either the backlog of unemployment or the new entrants to labour force on the plea of the past calculations being all faulty.

Consequently, a vague hope has been expressed that all the developmental projects included in the Draft Plan would somehow generate considerable employment opportunities—the extent of which the Commission was unable to guess at the time.

Apparently, the Commission is still unable to do so with any degree of precision. A committee was appointed to go into the methodology of the past calculations and suggest alternatives

so as to enable the Commission to present the problem and its solution in a quantified form. Even as the Commission decided on the latest changes in the Plan Draft, this problem does not appear to have crossed its mind.

Yet, the situation is daily deteriorating. During the three annual plans, there has practically been no expansion of employment opportunities, while additions to the labour force have gone on unabated. Today, unemployment among the educated and technically qualified has acquired menacing proportions.

Even now the Commission could have fruitfully considered breaking with its past "output approach" in the Plan to subordinate it to the "employment approach", which need not in any way impair the objective of raising national income.

In the present context, the Planning Commission has to serve as an important instrument to achieve the national objective of evenly distributing the increased national income, and to divert it to the weaker sections of the society.

The only available method of ensuring a fair distribution of the national income in a developing country like ours, where the state does not exercise overall command over production and distribution, is by the provision of full employment. With more employment provided, larger will be the area of distribution of national income.

The Draft Plan in its basic approach continues to cling to the pernicious view that the public sector, because of its "past failures", must never be allowed to play its prescribed role in the Indian economy—that of being the dominant sector. Even though the Commission is not unaware of the various factors that led to the "failures" in the public sector—faulty planning being the most outstanding among the causes.

To denigrate the public sector just because the earlier hopes of realising large profits from these undertakings did not materialise, and to correspondingly elevate

(Continued on page 36)

India and Non-alignment

A DIPLOMATIC OBSERVER

THERE is a general tendency amongst us all to invest a degree of immutability in anything that we propose or do. This may be due to a variety of reasons: our weakness for continuity in tradition and history, our disinclination to venture out in new directions, or the alleged absence of the concept of time in the Indian ethos.

Whatever it may be, the Indian mind tends to stick to ideas once propounded, and the exercise has invariably been to indulge in repetitive reproduction. Whatever the consequences might be of this in other fields and spheres of action, in politics and especially in our relations with other countries, this tendency may land us in very-queer straits

Permanent Interests

It is a well-known aphorism that no country has a permanent policy; what it has are only her permanent interests. This only shows how any country is continuously on the look out for adjustments in its policies and postures to serve her interests in a changing world.

It is enough to refer to a single instance. As the British Cabinet papers recently released show, the years 1938 and 1939 saw quick moving changes in the policies of the Soviet Union, Hitlerite Germany, and even the United Kingdom. Even as the Soviet Union was conducting negotiations with the United Kingdom for a Mutual Assistance Pact, there were parallel negotiations with Ribbentrop which ultimately resulted in the Non-Aggression Pact between Soviet Union and Germany.

One need not plead for such quick moving changes in our foreign policy directions. But if our policy in the sphere of international relations is condemned to be lead-footed by blind adherence to over-worn cliches, we face the danger of being left far behind in the competitive world of international relations, an experience we are not unfamiliar with in the matter of our industrial development and social progress

What are the principal ingredients of our foreign policy? One of the basic postulates has been a reliance on multilateralism while yet favouring bilateralism on specific and limited issues. Multilaterally we spread ourselves out in the direction of supporting the United Nations, initiating and advocating the non-aligned group of nations, sponsoring Afro-Asian meetings of the Bandung type, and retaining the Commonwealth relationship.

In the early fifties and to a certain extent even in sixties, the pursuit of multilateral diplomacy gave to India some advantage and a considerable element of prestige. Slowly, however, we found that some of our multilateral relations affecting our bilateral equations, and even our national issues.

Eloquent Example

An eloquent example is provided by the fact that no more does one hear enthusiastic accounts of the Bandung spirit and the Afro-Asian conferences. Indeed, the abortive attempt to convene the Second Afro-Asian Meeting at Algiers at the mid point of sixties ended in a total fiasco and there was no one in

India at least to shed a tear over this

How did this happen? We were the most enthusiastic promoters of the Bandung spirit and the Afro-Asian meet in the fifties. But in a decade we outgrew this and found out how this particular form of multilateral relations was no more in our interest

The immediate reason for this was our objection to the Pakistani move to air Indo-Pakistan disputes at this forum. We did not want this forum to be utilised for these purposes because we were convinced that the atmosphere of such a multilateral gathering would be vitiated if bilateral questions were allowed to foul it.

Bilateral Disputes

But was Pakistan a lone member in attempting this? If that were so, we need not have worked hard for writing a *finis* to Afro-Asian conferences. Obviously, Pakistan found a large measure of support for its view that there should be no taboo for bringing bilateral disputes to the forum of such multilateral get-togethers.

No one in India was sorry when on the shores of the Mediterranean in Algiers the ghost of Bandung spirit was laid low to the accompaniment of the Boumedien coup in Algiers.

That the multilateral set-up continuing in the Commonwealth links has been under severe pressure ever since Jawaharlal conceived it, is well known. The principal beneficiary of the Commonwealth link has always been the United Kingdom although, to ensure the continued membership thereof, she has provided some incentives to Commonwealth members in the trade field

The fact that today Great Britain is no more inhibited by the Commonwealth connections in its desperate move to secure entry into the European Common Market proves that she has no desire to cling to an empty shell if she has to make a choice, and the alternative is one that is demonstrably advantageous to her economy and security.

One by one, the Commonwealth preferences are in the process of erosion; the advantage

that India enjoyed in the matter of her textile exports to United Kingdom are as good as lost. There has been many other developments such as those involving people of Indian origin in the African countries, who had opted for British passports, which have resulted in the Commonwealth links being subjected to considerable strain and pressure.

Suffice it to say, there will not be many, again, who would regret the disappearance of this forum of India's multilateral relations.

Chequered History

A third form of multilateral relationship forged by India was the non-aligned group. The history of this group is a chequered one. Time there was when the West tried every conceivable method to weaken this group and the will of the non-aligned nations to thwart such moves kept them together.

This cohesion enabled it to work unitedly on many occasions such as the Suez conflict, the Korean War, etc. The involvement of the super-powers in cold war provided an opportunity for the non-aligned group to act as a bridge.

The acceleration of the process of de-colonisation, the building up of public opinion against nuclear proliferation, and many other over-riding international issues provided enough opportunity for this group to exert its combined influence in a healthy direction.

However, there was a growing feeling, especially in the latter half of the sixties, that while non-alignment as a concept continued to remain valid, working together of a large group of countries professing non-alignment in their international relations may not be productive of any great result. Observers to the Cairo Conference of the non-aligned summit were aware of this under-current of feeling and were, therefore, quite rightly sceptical of frequent meetings of the non-aligned summit.

The efforts made by India, UAR and Yugoslavia to add

another useful dimension to the *inter se* relationship among non-aligned groups by their example of tripartite economic cooperation also did not produce the desired effect. Indeed the failure of this tripartite agreement even to take off has dampened the enthusiasm witnessed at its initiation.

Yugoslavia, meanwhile, has thought in terms of strengthening her European connections and her ambitions to play the role of an honest broker in bringing the East and West Europe together in their joint quest for security. Her own new economic philosophies have opened avenues for her to develop closer links with the West European countries and her plea for introducing convertibility in the payments arrangements is to enlarge and strengthen this area gradually.

Belgrade Meet

Despite this increasing interest in Europe, Yugoslavia has intermittently exhibited its enthusiasm to activate the non-aligned group. It is well known that the strong Yugoslav initiative and her persistence were the main reasons for the Belgrade Preparatory

Meeting in 1969 followed by the New York meeting of Foreign Ministers.

It is again this Yugoslav initiative represented by the current visit of Marshal Tito to some African countries that clears the ground for the preparatory meeting of the non-aligned countries at Dar-es-Salam in April next as a precursor to a summit.

Yugoslav Aim

Why has Yugoslavia, whose growing interest in Europe is irrefutable, been persistent in playing up the non-aligned group despite the obvious lack of enthusiasm on the part of many in the group. Obviously Yugoslavia could not do it if the two were contradictory or conflicting. That they are not is the first proof that the pursuit of these two objectives is mutually helpful and complementary.

Perhaps Yugoslavia seeks to buttress the unique position she aspires for in European affairs by whatever she could gain from her leading role in the non-aligned group.

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Civil Service and Commitment

M.S.N. MENON

SRI M C Chagla is an eminent and respected man in this country. Even the Jana Sangh admires him. So what he says has to be listened to, but not necessarily accepted.

Sri Chagla is not known for profound thoughts, and when he essayed to be profound recently on the alleged "threat to democracy" in this country, he was merely pedantic, and pandered more to the proclivities of the pampered

The world is changing fast. Not all of us can run with it. Some are left behind and they often cry of the "threat to democracy". Their image of the world is simple, but the world has become complex, and now even fearful.

Impending Furies

The fear that haunts the world is that it might tumble into another war, because the surfeited majority in the prosperous West has chosen to be allent on the world's injustices.

But, here, in India the fear is not so much due to the alleged "threat to democracy" as the fear of retribution. The scale of justice have been held against the weak and the poor and the lower castes far too long in this country.

The police and judicial framework has become too fragile to hold the impending furies. The bonds are already bursting in West Bengal and Kerala.

As a jurist, Sri Chagla may be afraid of the revolutionary exercise of democracy by those who have been oppressed for centuries. But he has chosen the most absurd grounds for raising his cry.

Addressing the first meeting

of the newly formed Indian Association of Democrats in New Delhi (how this privileged breed gets organised to defend its vested interests) Sri Chagla said that the demand that civil service should be "committee", was a threat to democracy. He also deplored the "insidious attacks" on the judiciary.

The immediate "provocation" for Sri Chagla and others was Sri jagjivan Ram's Presidential address at the Bombay Congress session in which he drew attention to the need for the civil service to be committed to the policies of the Government. Since then the champions of democracy in this country have been raising false alarms.

And Sri Chagla in the new prophet and champion of "democracy", though he has already lost all faith in Indian parliamentary democracy and has become a votary of the Presidential system of government.

Entrenched Interests

Why? Is it because a politician has to change his views when he is out of office? This is true as far as Indian politicians are concerned, but it is also true that Sri Chagla and his ilk see in the politics of practice, which Smt Indira Gandhi has engineered, the greatest danger in the status quo and the entrenched interests in society.

Sri Chagla cannot be innocent of the developments of the last over four months and of the parting of ways of the Old and New order. The tragedy is that he has chosen to side with the Old order.

His defence of the civil service and the judiciary on the ground

that their commitment to honour the policies of the people of this country would destroy the framework of democracy, therefore, not only exposes his own predilection but also his lack of understanding of the subject.

The role of the civil service and the judiciary in a fast changing society has long been debated. The problem arose because of the natural inertia of conservatives to change. Raging discussions have been going on in several countries, for example in the USA and Britain, about the role of the civil service and the judiciary in a dynamic society.

Britain and other countries had been long debating the utility of the Upper House. The Western experts and scholars thought that the civil service and the judiciary must go more by the spirit of the laws and institutions and less by the letter. This itself is a commitment to change.

But even this concession of the conservatives is not acceptable to the impatient youth of the West and this is why it wants to tear up the Establishment.

Sri Chagla talked of the British civil service traditions. But is it any more relevant to us? Britain is a capitalist society, but we have chosen the socialist path of development.

This means that the state will be the dominant element in economic activities like production, distribution and commerce, and purely administrative activities will take a secondary place. Moreover, those engaged in economic activities will far outnumber those engaged in administrative activities.

It is obvious that we have to approach these two activities of the state from different points of view. The state and its servants must be impartial in the administration of law, but they cannot be impartial in the economic activities, for these are guided by our social and economic goals to uplift the poor and the weak.

This is a national commitment to which our entire national struggle has pledged. No civil

(Continued on page 38)

Gathering Storm

KRANTI SEN

WHILE the sky is clearing in Nagaland, thunderclouds are gathering over Manipur. Long years of neglect and apathy to political aspirations of the Manipuris have slowly alienated the younger generation from "India", and strengthened revivalist and secessionist forces.

It has also produced a dichotomy between the young and the old. Two years ago, the elder politicians were apprehensive that unless the Centre conceded the demand of Statehood and took concrete measures for the economic development of Manipur, a stage might come when the restive youth would take to the path of rebellion and go out of their control.

Ominous Trends

Current trends in this highly sensitive border territory are ominously suggestive of a repetition of the Naga story. Taking a leaf out of the Naga rebellion, the angry youth are reported to have formed a "Revolutionary Government of Manipur", which has established contact with Pakistan and China, and been assured of arms help by both the countries.

The situation started deteriorating fast after the unfortunate incidents during the Prime Minister's visit to Imphal in September last year when three demonstrators were killed in police firing. The army was called out for maintaining peace. Subsequently, the army was replaced by the CRP.

Four months after the disturbances, the CRP is still posted in the town. The first thing that strikes a visitor to Imphal are the CRP tents dotted all over

the town, CRP men standing guard at all street corners and market-places, and CRP vehicles speeding by every few minutes. One feels as if one has blundered into a city where a bloody revolution had just been suppressed.

Soon after the Prime Minister's visit, a Students Federation delegation led by the General Secretary of the D M College Students Union, met Smt Gandhi in New Delhi to place their demand for full Statehood. They also demanded a separate university for Manipur and apprised her of the acute problem of the educated unemployed. Smt Gandhi, according to the students, rejected all the demands out of hand. They were also aggrieved at what they called her unsympathetic attitude and brusqueness.

It may be mentioned here that Sri N. Tombi Singh, Education Minister of the now dissolved Cabinet, had finalized the arrangement for a separate university centre at Imphal for holding examinations. Necessary permission from the UGC was also obtained. Smt Gandhi reportedly told the students that she did not think it necessary to set up a university centre at Imphal.

The delegation returned empty-handed. The extremist group of students which had been telling the student community that nothing could be gained from the Centre through peaceful methods, took the we-told-you-so attitude. Nagas, they said, had won a separate State for themselves because they took to the gun, while Manipur, being almost one and a half times the size of Nagaland and more than double in population, had been denied Statehood only because the Manipuris were a peaceful people.

"We must talk to Delhi in the language it understands", they declared. The Student Federation boys had little to counter this trend of thought or talk. The extremists went on winning new friends and influencing more people.

Meanwhile, allegations were being made that the security forces were torturing innocent villagers in the Ukhrul area while searching for arms smuggled in by the rebel Nagas from China. The Pan-Manipur Youth League—an organization subscribing to the extremist ideology—started a satyagraha movement before the Secretariat in the mid-December to protest against the alleged torture.

Popular Response

It evoked much response from the people. Captain Priyabrata Singh, Maharajkumar of Manipur, led the first batch of satyagrahis. The second batch was led by Sri Pisakha Singh, former Principal of Manipur College. The satyagrahis were peaceful and disciplined. They had put up a thatched shed to protect themselves from the sun. But one day, the police swooped on them and destroyed the shed. What led to the sudden hauteur and unnecessary show of power by the myrmidons of law is not known. It only helped to further exacerbate the feelings of the youth and create ill-will. Anyway, the satyagraha came to its scheduled end.

While the ostensible reason for the satyagraha was to protest against the torture of innocent villagers, discerning people could not fail to notice the anti-India undertone of the movement. Perhaps that is why the Maharajkumar and some other elderly people later dissociated themselves from it. The theme of a symposium, organised by the post-graduate students of a local college, was that "Manipur should secede from the Indian Union for her future prosperity".

Indeed, *Meitei* (Manipuri) sovereignty has become an *idée fixe* with the younger generation. A corollary of this is the tendency to look upon all non-Manipuris as *Mayangs* (outsiders). Hatred

for the Mayang finds expression in all disturbances or mob violence. When the students went on a rampage during Smt Gandhi's visit, they could be seen setting police vehicles and State transport buses on fire amidst shouts of "*Mayang hallo*" (kill the outsider)

The feelings of separateness and urge for separation from India has gone too deep for an easy or quick solution. Unlike the Naga "Federal Government" of the earlier days, the "Revolutionary Government" of Manipur is more a symbolic power rather than an effective authority commanding an area. Support to it is still amorphous and inchoate rather than organized and material, but if the present drift is allowed to grow unchecked, it may become a force to be reckoned with

The underground "Government" is composed of three organizations—the Meitei State Committee, the Pan-Mongoloid Union and the Revolutionary Party. Of these, the Meitei State Committee was initially a revivalist organization, reminding people of the ancient civilization of the Manipuris, their distinct cultural and national identity—all of which had been swamped and swallowed by "India".

It carried on a movement for reviving the Meitei script so as to replace the Bengali script in which the Manipuri language is written. It conducted research on old *punthas* to underline the distinctiveness of Manipuri civilization.

Gradually, it became the spearhead of the secessionist movement and was later joined by the other two organizations. Together, they raised the banner of revolt with the legend "Manipur's role in South-East Asia" inscribed on it

So far, their activities have been limited mainly to sending young men to Pakistan and China. They are also believed to be responsible for a number of armed robberies. The first of these, Rs 35,000 looted from a post office, was committed in the latter part of 1968. The second was the Imphal College robbery in early 1969 in which

Rs 10,000 was looted. The third robbery was in LIC in mid-1969 in which Rs 5000 was looted. The fourth was in a high school, about 10 km north of Imphal, in which Rs 13,00 was taken away. The last was in the BOC, the amount being a paltry one thousand rupees. All the money is believed to have gone into buying arms

Arms Training

The extremists started sending their young men to Pakistan as early as 1964. Recently, Pakistan is reported to have given them an assurance that it would train the rebels in the use of firearms. During the past five years, several hundred rebels have trekked to Pakistan and come back with arms and ammunition.

Once a large group was arrested in Tripura when trying to cross over to Pakistan. Recently, another batch of 80 was arrested and some incriminating documents were recovered from them. According to one estimate, about 250 highly trained armed men are still at large.

Contact with China was established much later through the Naga rebels when, under Phizo's instructions they turned to Peking for help. So far, the extremists do not appear to have received any sizable quantity of arms from China. But present trends indicate that a closer relationship with Peking is being forged.

A key figure of the underground movement has gone to China with a group of 20 or 25 young men. He has reportedly formed an emigre "government" in China, himself becoming its "Foreign Minister". One of his brothers is a top police official and another is working at a UNESCO centre. After passing his MA he worked for some time as a teacher in the Ukhrul area, then joined the underground. Another important figure is a young man whom this correspondent knew as a promising intellectual. He, too, has since gone underground.

Without mincing words, one has to admit that support for

the underground movement is pretty wide, specially among the youth, and it is increasing. Many of them have brilliant academic records. Even newly married boys are known to have joined the underground, leaving their wives and kids at home.

If a Naga-type armed rebellion has not broken out in Manipur, that should be no cause for comfort or complacency. In one's talks with the Left leaders, one gets the unmistakable impression that they are deeply worried and apprehensive of the future.

The unimaginative policy pursued by the Centre is making the task of the patriotic forces extremely difficult. The intensity of public feelings can be gauged from the fact that the Manipur Congress has decided to start a "peaceful mass agitations" if the Centre does not fulfil the demand for statehood within a month.

Democratic Movement

The Left forces are combating the secessionist trend by organizing mass movements on the democratic demands of people. An all-party Action Committee has been formed to conduct the movement for Statehood. It consists of the CPI, SSP, PSP, CPM and the Manipur People's Party formed by former Congress leader Salam Tombi Singh. From February 16, the Committee will start a relay hunger strike. After that, volunteers will offer satyagraha before Government offices and court arrest. About 3,000 people are expected to participate in the Satyagraha.

The CPI is growing in spite of heavy odds. The party runs a daily in Manipuri language. It has a fairly large following among the students, which is creditable in view of the overall situation. The SSP also has its own mass bases. Together, the two parties represent the bulk of the organized Left. But their growth depends to a great extent on the speedy fulfilment of the major demands, especially that of Statehood.

Statehood must be conceded right away. Secondly, economic

(Continued on page 31)

Bhilai: Facts and Fiction

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BHILAI is an island outpost, but a significant one for the national economy. This is a fact. That it is serving regional economic growth, is yet a fiction.

Steel is the sinews of a nation. It means strength. Before Independence, India had two medium plants in the private sector, and one owned by the Mysore State. Together they produced about a million tonnes of steel. In 1951, they were producing 1.3 million tonnes. By 1969, India's steel production rose to seven million tonnes of ingots. The expansion of the steel plants has been rather slow and it is feared that if the proposed expansions are not completed by 1973, there might be a shortage of over two million tonnes.

Steel Exporter

The significance of the public sector steel plants to the Indian economy has grown with the years. If India used to import steel worth Rs 100 crores before, today it is an exporter. The 1969-70 export target was Rs 90 crores. But export performance itself is not an indicator of significance when internal demand is high.

The Hindustan Steel Ltd (HSL) alone, with a total investment of Rs 1,100 crores in four steel plants, has sold iron and steel products in the ten years ending 1967-68 worth Rs 1,380 crores. This has meant a saving of Rs 953 crores in foreign exchange, or nearly Rs 100 crores yearly. In 1968-69 it sold steel and by-products worth Rs 252 crores and had an export of Rs 41.5 crores.

It provides employment to 120,000 people and paid Rs 43 crores by way of wages and salaries in 1967-68. It has spent Rs 70 crores on housing its workers and every year spends over Rs 3 crores on workers' welfare.

The Bhilai Steel Plant is the largest unit of the HSL group. It was built with Soviet assistance, under an economic and technical assistance agreement signed on February 2, 1955.

It is a developmental project unlike others. It has an investment of Rs 377.3 crores (upto March 1968), with a capacity of 2.5 million tonnes of steel, employing in all 46,497 people, with an annual wage and salary bill of Rs 12-15 crores.

It covers an area of eight square miles with five lakh population. It has a self-sufficient township with all modern amenities. It runs 40 schools

with a student population of 31,500, 16 medical units with a large hospital, and transport for staff and children.

It produced, in 1968-69, 1,344,000 tonnes of saleable steel worth Rs 136 crores. Its export is the largest, being Rs 34 crores in 1968-69. The total export so far has been Rs 80.41 crores.

Bhilai is, thus, fifteen years old. What assessment can one make of its performance? Under the Bhilai Steel Plant agreement, the Soviet Union undertook to build the Bhilai Steel Plant with an initial one million tonne capacity based on Soviet technology, and offered a total credit of Rs 64.74 crores for the purchase of Soviet plant and machinery. Bhilai, it was decided, should specialise in the production of rails and heavy structurals.

Work on the plant began in 1957. By February 1961, all the units of the one million stage were commissioned. By then it was decided to expand the plant to 2.5 million tonne capacity. In 1967, with the commissioning of the Wire Rod Mill, the main facilities for the expansion were complete.

Work has since begun on the further expansion of the plant to 3.2 million tonnes as part of the Fourth Plan programme. These expansions were covered by new Soviet credit and technical assistance agreements.

The plant has already acquired sufficient experience in construction. For the present expansion, the foreign exchange component as well as the number of foreign specialists have been reduced. There were 908 Soviet specialists when the Bhilai construction began, but for the current expansion only 50 Soviet specialists are being employed. The Russian experts are now engaged only in very essential teaching and advisory capacity.

Future Steelmen

The training of future steelmen is a significant aspect of the work at Bhilai. More than 700 Indian technicians, graduate apprentices and senior executives were trained at various Soviet plants in the USSR. Some of them are now engaged in teaching at the Bhilai Technical Institute.

The Institute has already trained a number of students of Ceylon and Burma in steel technology. It is at present training the first batch of Iranian engineers under an Indo-Iranian agreement. In all about 500 Iranians are to be trained. This is indeed

a welcome development, apart from the foreign exchange earned, for it recognises India's capacity to impart know-how in steel technology

At 2.5 million tonnes, Bhilai accounts for 27 per cent of the country's production of steel, 63 per cent of rails, 90 per cent of pig iron and 29 per cent of large sections. The plant is the best maintained—at least this is what the Bhilai authorities claim. It has achieved a world record.

Bhilai's production, sale and export figures have steadily risen during the past years. However, the recession and labour troubles of 1969 did have an adverse effect on an otherwise steady development. However, production has since picked up, but the progress has been rather slow because of a variety of problems. Today the demand conditions have improved and it is expected that in the current year Bhilai will reach its rated capacity.

Production Pattern

Japan is the biggest buyer of Bhilai pig iron and the Soviet Union that of angles, beams and channels. There are 27 other countries, developed and developing, who are buyers of Bhilai products. Export of steel has already become an important element of India's foreign trade. And significantly, exports do make a profit at present—as much as 30 dollars per tonne.

The increasing demand for different types of steel products has made it necessary to introduce new patterns of production at Bhilai. There is a proposal to put up a seamless tube manufacturing plant as also a plate mill.

Bhilai is also engaged in the utilisation of by-products. The coke oven gas produces by-products like ammonia, Benzol and crude tar. Ammonia is converted into ammonium sulphate, a fertilizer. The HSL is coordinating the processing of the by-products of all the steel plants.

Bhilai has another unique advantage—most of the raw materials required for producing steel are available close by. The Plant owns and operates most of the mines.

The main tasks before Bhilai at present are to cut down costs, reach rated capacity and to improve its technology. These alone can augment the profitability.

The expansion of the Plant has been going rather slow. Apart from labour problems, there are, of course, technical problems, called critical facilities, which are needed to make up the technological requirements for optimum production.

There is acute shortage of refractory materials and it is acting as a check to higher production. This reduces the furnace availability. The indigenous refractory industry has failed to meet the country's requirements. The HSL has proposed to set up a refractory plant under its Fourth Plan programme. In the meantime, the Soviet Union has agreed to supply refractory materials to the HSL.

The raw material position is good, though the steep upward price movement of raw materials has created serious difficulties for Bhilai to show substantial profit margins.

The HSL is still piling up large losses yearly, yet Bhilai's share in it is insignificant. In fact, Bhilai made profits in 1963-64 and continued till 1965-66. Since then it has shown a loss, mostly due to the recession. It was using only about 70 per cent of its capacity. Lower production means lower receipts.

There are, however, a variety of reasons for losses other than the recession. Raw materials from one-third of the cost, and the price of iron ore and coke has gone up considerably. For example, the price of coal has moved from Rs 64 per tonne in 1964-65 to Rs 87 in 1968-69. The railway freight has increased by Rs 5 per tonne during the same period, while the rise in iron ore price has been Rs 6 per tonne. During the same period wages have risen from Rs 202 per month to Rs 290 per month.

But steel price has not been revised proportionately. Most of the Central Ministries have been opposed to a price revision, particularly the Railways which uses about 40 per cent of steel production in the country, and the Finance Ministry which is afraid of a sympathetic price movement of other commodities.

There is also the heavy burden due to fixed charges and the need to carry a large inventory. Depreciation and interest on loans alone came to Rs 31 crores in 1968-69. Depreciation is allowed at seven per cent, while the plant life is expected to be 25 years. These are technical and accounting problems which are beyond the layman, but significant enough to the final profit and loss account.

As regards heavy overheads due to surplus staff, this is not just an economic question. It is related to the general employment policy of the Government. Bhilai certainly can reduce its staff by almost a quarter—this is admitted by the Plant authorities.

Heavy Overheads

Bhilai also carries a large inventory of the value of Rs 29 crores. The interest on this blocked money and the problem of obsolescence are causing considerable worry. But the Plant authorities feel that when nothing can be taken for granted as regards availability of spares and raw materials, it is necessary to carry a large stock to avoid a breakdown in production which may cause more loss to the Plant.

Of course, demand conditions ultimately determine profitability. But the price of steel has become equally significant. During the recession, the Plant incurred additional losses by giving rebates and spending more on sales organisation.

But the higher demand for steel at present has not benefited the HSL. It has only helped the blackmarket and the middlemen. The HSL's case is that if we can allow the middlemen to profit on scarcity, and since the user is already paying a higher price, it might as well take advantage of the situation by charging what the market can bear.

The problem is how to secure the interest of small users? The big users are in any way protected.

(Continued on page 32)

Mounting Kisan Agitation

R. K. MISHRA

THE kisan agitation which has engulfed the Ganganagar district of Rajasthan shows signs of spreading to other parts of the State. If the announcements and plans of various political parties are any indication, a large part of rural Rajasthan may soon witness peasant agitations of varying intensity.

The agitation in Ganganagar, therefore, has assumed special significance not only because it may prove to be a forerunner of a wider upheaval in this relatively quiet region of our country, but also because it has brought into focus sharply some of the complexities of the rural scene, the complicated challenges before the Left parties, the problems that the ruling Congress party has to grapple with and the emergence of new economic forces and political trends in the State.

It also underlines how a climate of rising expectations in the masses can be pressed into the service of the privileged, and the difficult problem of how to avoid such a situation.

Prosperous Region

Ganganagar is the most prosperous agricultural region of an economically backward State. The region is fortunate to be served by three irrigation systems—the Gang Canal, the Bhakra system and the Rajasthan canal which is under construction. Nearly twenty lakh acres of land in the district is already receiving the benefit of canal irrigation.

Per capita income in the district is double that in the whole State. The ratio of total irrigated area to the total agricultural land is very high. More than fifty per cent of the total invest-

ment in the irrigation sector during the three plan periods in the State has been so made as to benefit the Ganganagar farmers. The district will continue to claim a major share in the fruits of investment made in the irrigation sector in the Fourth Plan also.

Agriculture, therefore, has become a prosperous industry in the area and value of land has appreciated immensely. No region in the State, including Kota where the Chambal irrigation system is still in the process of development, can hope to catch up with Ganganagar even in foreseeable future.

Merciless Exploitation

Agricultural prosperity in the Ganganagar region has given birth to an economically powerful class of rich peasantry. This economic power has also given to the rich peasantry political influence out of all proportion to the number of seats the district commands in the State Assembly.

The capacity to provide financial inducement to political leaders and administrators is only one of the factors that give the rich peasantry in Ganganagar its amazing capacity to influence decisions in regard to policies involving the rural sector. There are other factors also.

The rich peasant families in the area have divided themselves in almost all the political parties that operate in the State, including the Marxist Communists whose peasant leadership is provided by the ranking wealthiest peasant families in the district. Many political leaders and Government officers and their relations have acquired land in the canal irrigated areas and their

personal interests coincide with the vested interests of the rich peasantry in general.

Alongside this prosperity, Ganganagar has the largest concentration of Scheduled Castes engaged in the vocation of agricultural labour. Subjected to merciless exploitation, these agricultural labourers till the land for the landowners who pay them anything ranging from 1/20th to 1/50th of the produce. They are steeped in debts, usually provided the landowners, and have no means of freeing themselves from their clutches.

Land Hunger

Intensity of the land hunger amongst them is indicated by the simple fact that nearly 90,000 applications of landless persons are under consideration of the State Government for the last eight years for allotment of land. For all these years they have been living on the hope that land would be allotted to them. Some of them were given barren lands on a temporary cultivation basis. They levelled that land and made it fit for cultivation, but their title to it is still uncertain.

Every drop of water in Ganganagar is precious. Inadequate supply of water or failure to secure it in time may mean loss of the entire labour and inputs of the farmer. That is why both the Colonisation and Irrigation Departments are sources of great political influence and extensive corruption in the region.

When viewed in this background, it will be easy to understand how the kisan agitation in Ganganagar acquired its present sweep and intensity. The short-sighted policy of the Government to attempt to crush the movement by arming itself with draconian powers also foundered because of inadequate appreciation of the situation. Any propagation of no-rent campaign was made punishable with one year's rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs 1,000. But this failed to deter the farmers who continued to come in hundreds daily to court arrest.

Its repressive measures having

This will be seen from the fact that whereas India was begging for steel plants in the early fifties, today we are almost self-sufficient—from designing to fabrication of a steel plant. The Central Design Organisation of the Hindustan Steel is not only entrusted with the designing of the sixth blast furnace of the Bhilai steel plant and bulk of the equipment for Bokaro, but also is now designing steel mill for Singapore. The Heavy Machine Building Plant at Ranchi is now capable of outfitting a million tonne steel plant mostly with indigenous know-how and equipment.

In the field of oil, too, where we did not have one geologist at the time of Independence, leave alone any equipment like the rigs, today we have a large cadre of oilmen, steelmen and others to meet the country's requirements. We have today over 60 rigs, mostly supplied by the Soviets, and have developed the capacity to manufacture the same in the Ranchi complex as to meet our future requirements.

Power plants and the plant manufacturing machinery for the power plants HEEP, (Hardwar) is to free us permanently from dependence on outside aid for electrical equipments which would have been inevitably imparted in the absence of such capacities now being created in the country.

Direct Savings

Since all the products shown above are a must for a developing economy like ours, to ensure rapid economic growth, their availability within the country is a direct saving of foreign exchange to the extent they would have cost had we gone for them in the foreign markets. We are even today short of steel and certainly would have required much more in the absence of the indigenous products. Today it is a matter of the greatest satisfaction that instead of imparting we are able to export some products like the steel from the Bhilai plant.

We are also still importing enormous quantities of crude oil

which for every million tonne cost us Rs 10 crores. One can say that the oil produced by the Oil and Natural Gas Commission mainly with the Soviet help again is a direct saving, and such more will be saved in the years to come when the ONGC further expands its activities. The Commission already has planned to produce 14.5 million tonnes by the end of 1979.

Plants like the Heavy Machine Building at Ranchi, Heavy Electricals at Hardwar, Instruments at Kota and Palghat, are now busy exploring markets abroad and the possibility is not remote of their securing foreign orders. The very idea of selling industrial goods in the sophisticated world markets makes one proud of these plants.

Unutilised Capacity

A programme large in concept, larger still in operation and magnitude, obviously cannot have one-sided impact. Likewise, the Soviet aid also has the other side, too, which has emerged mostly as a result of factors over which, to some extent, no one has control. To begin with, most of these plants are now running with surplus capacity ranging from 30 per cent to 70 per cent, and the allegation is that this is due to the over-size of the plants. An unprejudicial assessment, however, reveals that this surplus capacity is mostly due to lack of orders as a result of paucity of resources in the past few years.

Thus, for example, as against the programme of adding two million tonnes steel capacity every year as envisaged in the fifties by our planners, the actual addition has not been of even half a million tonne per annum. Obviously the capacities created at the Ranchi of Heavy Machine Building Plant cannot be utilized to its optimum capacity.

In the absence of steel and power plants, the allocations to which have been cut due to paucity of resources even in the revised Fourth Plan, the capacities in the Heavy Electricals Equipment Plant at Hardwar and the Kota and Palghat Instrument plants are held up for want of

utilization, so much so that the Palghat plant has now been shelved till the end of the Fourth Plan and the running of HEEP (Hardwar) is reduced to half of its created capacity.

The unutilized large surplus capacities in most of the plants has given rise to several other evils such as higher cost and wastage. The higher cost is due to the overhead cost of capital (both fixed and running) affecting, thus, per unit cost of the plant which in many a cases has been substantially higher than envisaged in the Detailed Project Reports.

Manned mostly by local labour indifferently trained, the quality of work is naturally poor and not up to the standard required for such sophisticated products. Besides, lack of practice, as a result of lack of orders, make them idle for days together, forgetting even little of the training and practice they might have acquired initially. Moreover, the management is helpless in removing undesirable elements, the environment created are such that no one works, if he possibly can avoid, and this results in lower output per worker, adding further to the cost per unit.

What is at stake is not only the goodwill generated as a result of the assistance offered by the Soviet Union and India's capacity to run these enterprises well (already being questioned due to poor results of the Public Sector plants), but also the future shape of the economy. We have built these plants as part of our long-term strategy to make India industrially strong and self-reliant. Succeed, therefore, we must.

KINDLY NOTE

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Mounting Kisan Agitation

R. K. MISHRA

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ment in the irrigation sector during the three plan periods in the State has been so made as to benefit the Ganganagar farmers. The district will continue to claim a major share in the fruits of investment made in the irrigation sector in the Fourth Plan also.

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The rich peasant families in the area have divided themselves in almost all the political parties that operate in the State, including the Marxist Communists whose peasant leadership is provided by the ranking wealthiest peasant families in the district. Many political leaders and Government officers and their relations have acquired land in the canal irrigated areas and their

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Every drop of water in Ganganagar is precious. Inadequate supply of water or failure to secure it in time may mean loss of the entire labour and inputs of the farmer. That is why both the Colonisation and Irrigation Departments are sources of great political influence and extensive corruption in the region.

When viewed in this background, it will be easy to understand how the kisan agitation in Ganganagar acquired its present sweep and intensity. The short-sighted policy of the Government to attempt to crush the movement by arming itself with draconian powers also foundered because of inadequate appreciation of the situation. Any propagation of no-rent campaign was made punishable with one year's rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs 1,000. But this failed to deter the farmers who continued to come in hundreds daily to court arrest.

Its repressive measures having

failed, the Government is now trying to extricate itself from the situation by making gestures of concessions to the farmers without entering into a dialogue with the leaders of the movement in the hope that concession would pacify the masses and deprive the Opposition parties of the political fruits of a negotiated settlement. This "cleverness" is also not showing signs of being very effective.

The kisan agitation in Ganganagar started under two different banners—the Kisan Sangharsha Samiti and the Kisan Sabha (led by CPI and CPM, respectively, in different areas). The Bharatiya Kranti Dal and the Sanyukta Socialist Party were constituents of the Kisan Sangharsha Samiti. All these elements were included in a Kisan Morcha earlier.

But the Communists separated themselves when the Samiti was formed, supposedly due to differences on the question of methods, the former pleading for a mass satyagraha, while the latter, specially the BKD, seeking to confine itself to individual satyagraha.

Against Started

The agitation began on November 3 last year at Anupgarh where the State Government, in accordance with its earlier announcement, started auction of Government-owned agricultural land in order to raise resources to improve its admittedly precarious financial position.

Sections in the State Cabinet were opposed to the programme of auction for various reasons. While some opposed it on the ground that this was repugnant to the professed aim of distributing land amongst the landless, some others opposed it on the ground that the Government had claimed that there was not enough land even for the Pong-Dam-oustees from Himachal Pradesh, and, therefore, auction of land would make its claim untenable.

At one stage, the State Cabinet informally decided to postpone the auction programme. But this decision was not adhered to and the auction programme began

according to schedule.

Theoretically, the landless peasants stand to gain if the land is not auctioned because he does not have the money to compete in a bid. In practice, the rich peasants, the corrupt administrators and influential persons are also in favour of the policy of allotment of land.

Illegal Encroachment

While in auction they have to engage in an open bid, in the allotment programme they hope to wrangle precious land either by using their influence or by bribing the officials.

Experience upto date shows that this hope is not entirely misplaced. The State Government had been repeatedly postponing the programme of auction of land for the last six or seven years because of the pressure of vested interests and the fear of a mass agitation.

Why did it, therefore, persist in going ahead with auction programme this year? As a very small area of land was proposed to be auctioned, its significance in terms of raising revenue was negligible.

Two explanations are available. First, a large number of rich peasants have illegally encroached upon Government-owned land in the area. In league with corrupt officials, they have been cultivating these fields for many years. They have not even paid land revenue.

Though the definition of landless is so elastic as to include all and sundry, these rich trespassers had little hope of getting a title over the land they had grabbed in the normal course. Only an auction could have given them an opportunity to regularise their illegal possession.

Secondly, the Government wanted to launch a pilot operation to test the capacity of the farmers to resist large-scale auction of land in future. The State Government was caught on the wrong foot because a series of unpopular measures proposed to be taken by various Government departments coincided and gave rise to an all-inclusive movement which brought the small, middle and

the rich farmer together.

Diverse political elements like the two Communist parties, BKD and SSP joined in the agitation which has now secured the support of the Swatantra Party and the Jana Sangh also. Such an all-inclusive kisan movement poses serious problems for the ruling party and the State Government, no doubt. But it also gives rise to a serious challenge for the Opposition, specially those who seek to take a principled stand.

This is best illustrated by the dilemma through which the Communists have passed. They launched the agitation primarily to oppose auction of government-owned land. When the auction was suspended by the Government, they announced suspension of this movement also.

Second Phase

In fact, the Kisan Sabha and the Communist Party workers arrested during the November agitation were released when the Communists gave in writing that they were suspending the movement as its primary purpose had been fulfilled.

But within a few days they had to rejoin the agitation. In the beginning, the movement had acquired support on the issue of scrapping of the wholly unjustified programme of auctioning of land, but by the time the auction was suspended, the rich peasant interests had fully realised its efficacy to put pressure for securing concessions in their interest.

During the second phase of the agitation, after the Communists rejoined it, two sets of demands were put forth: a four-point charter of demands of the CPM-led Kisan Sabha and a thirty-three point charter of demands of the Kisan Sangharsha Samiti.

The four-point charter of demand included categorical declaration by the Government for scrapping the auction programme, framing of rules for allotment of land to the landless, abolition of betterment levy and cess on cash crops, withdrawal of enhanced rent rates, and grant of *khatedari* rights to the farmers in

the Rajasthan canal area (this right was taken away under an amendment to the tenancy law). The main issue, of course, was the auction programme

In the Governor's address while inaugurating the current session of the Assembly, the State Government made a categorical declaration that in future no land in the canal-irrigated area would be auctioned, it would be allotted to the landless on a fixed price. This announcement did not ease the situation. All sections of public opinion, including Congressmen, demanded a judicial probe into police firings, withdrawal of the repressive ordinance and release of all arrested persons

The Government had to concede these demands and followed it up with the announcements that all landholdings in the State up to three acres would be exempted from betterment levy, proposal to enhance land revenue would be dropped by suspending the present settlement operations, cess on cotton crops would not be realised this year because of damage due to diseases and committees would be set up to suggest ways to resolve other problems of the area

Major Victory

These concessions constitute a major victory for the agitation and normally these should have led to the starting of a dialogue between the Government and the representatives of the kisan agitation. But no such development took place. The rich peasant interests were not satisfied

The exemption given in respect of betterment levy to holding below three acres was a welcome decision which would benefit about sixty per cent of farmer in the State as a whole. But as far as Ganganagar is concerned, where the holdings are larger, this would benefit hardly ten per cent of cultivators. The rich peasants in the area, therefore, insist on total abolition of betterment levy. Similarly, in case of other economic demands also, the rich peasants want to secure the maximum advantage

Having once joined the all-

inclusive kisan movement, the Left parties find it difficult to extricate themselves from it. The fear that they might be isolated makes it necessary for them to invest "progressive" issues for remaining in the movement

Secondly, the rich-peasant parties like the BKD, which had little hesitation in launching an anti-Communist tirade even when the agitation was in full force, consider it politically necessary to create a situation in which the Communist might be forced either to support the untenable demands of the richer section of the peasantry or to get isolated from the agitation

Main Enemies

Thirdly, the ruling party, the State Government and the Chief Minister Sri M L Sukhadia are between the devil and the deep sea. Sri Sukhadia's colleagues are not prepared to have a dialogue with BKD leader Kumbharam Arya, whom they consider as their main enemy, and at the same time, they would not like the Communists, specially the Marxists, to negotiate with them on behalf of the kisans of Ganganagar.

The attitude of the ruling party leaders as also the Opposition must be seen in a wider context which is full of political potentialities. The success already achieved by the Ganganagar agitation have opened up prospects of its spilling over to other districts

The BKD has received the apparent contradiction between its allegiance to lawful methods and the necessity to launch an agitation by giving to the movement the name of individual satyagraha. The Jana Sangh has lost no time in emulating the BKD. The Swatantra Party has followed and has given wholehearted support to the agitation

Ganganagar peasant has, thus, provided these parties with a form of agitation which would not come into conflict with their conscience committed to defend the rule of law. The Left parties, of course, are always eager to initiate, join or support any mass

movement.

Ganganagar has also shown that the rural scene provides a plethora of problems on which to agitate. As revision of land revenue rates take place every twenty years, in many parts of Rajasthan an increase in rent rules is imminent. The success of the Ganganagar farmer is bound to inspire the peasantry in other areas to make an attempt to resist any increase

In the irrigated areas, abolition of betterment levy, and in arid areas adequate famine relief works, allotment of land to the landless, and hosts of other issues are available for agitation. Concessions given in one part also create consequential demands

For example, when Ganganagar farmers succeeded in securing postponement of the imposition of land revenue ranging from Rs 9 to Rs 11 per acre on irrigated land, kisan in Jaipur protested with justification that they were required to pay land revenue ranging from Rs 14 to Rs 22 per acre on well irrigated land. In other areas, it is much higher. The demand for rationalisation of land revenue has already started snowballing

With both the form of agitation and popular issues available to them, the Opposition parties may well engulf rural Rajasthan in agitations of varying degree of intensity, subject to their organisational capacity

Serious Threat

Such a situation may pose a serious threat to the ruling Congress party. BKD leader Kumbharam Arya, arch political enemy of Chief Minister Sukhadia, has reasserted as a political factor in Rajasthan due to the Ganganagar agitation. Extension of the agitation in other areas, specially Churu, Jhunjhunu, Sikar and Bikaner, which have sizable Jat population, will enable Sri Arya an opportunity to spread his sphere of influence

Congressmen in these areas cannot oppose the demands that the agitation is likely to throw up, and this will aggravate the difficulties of the State Government and its leaders. Sri Arya's

links with Congressmen have not completely snapped and he remains a potential rallying point of all disgruntled elements

The Jana Sangh and the SSP already appear to have cast their lot with him, the former has announced its intention to start a satyagraha in Kota-Bundi area, and the latter may launch an agitation in Banswara.

The situation does not pose difficulties for the ruling party alone. It poses a challenge for the Communists also. Should they join such movements in their own areas of influence? What should be their attitude towards the demand made by the richer section of the peasantry? For example, is it a principled stand to support the demand for complete abolition of betterment levy and cess on cash crops? Is it a principled position for them to demand relief in land-revenue increase for all farmers—big, medium and small?

Is it wrong to ask the people in prosperous agricultural regions to contribute a small fraction of their additional gains, acquired due to investments in which the poor people of the entire State have put in their share to contribute for the development of backward areas? What should be a principled stand when measures to tax the rural rich are opposed and intermingled with the demands of the poor and the landless?

The Ganganagar agitation and its aftermath could have led to a healthy polarisation of political forces in the State if the ruling party or for that matter any other party had the courage to take a principled stand to tax the rich and give relief to the poor.

But either by design or accident, the political parties are not helping to bring about such a situation. Significantly, the State Government's decision to validate illegal transfers made in violation of the Ceilings Law has not been criticised by any political party, including the parties of the Left.

Of course, this is being done on the fallacious plea of safeguarding the interests of the landless. Taking advantage of this acquiescent attitude, the Jana

Sangh has now decided to demand the raising of the ceilings limit in the Kota-Bundi area.

It is obvious that any demand for the entire peasantry, as different from that of the poor peasantry or the landless, tends to benefit primarily the richer sections. The Left parties, by avoiding to come into clash with the richer peasants, will only strengthen the political influence of the economically entrenched rich peasantry.

For example, the character of the kisan movement in Ganga-

nagar would have changed if a demand for rise in wages or share in produce of the agricultural labourer had been raised, or if the Government had been asked to allot land tilled by the agricultural labourers to them in keeping with its professions to abolish intermediaries.

As the peasant movement extends, not only the professions of the ruling Congress party but also of the Left parties, to serve and safeguard the interests of the poor, are likely to be tested concretely.

TABLE SHOWING RELATIVE PROSPERITY OF GANGANAGAR FARMER AS COMPARED TO THE WHOLE STATE OF RAJASTHAN

	<i>Rajasthan</i>	<i>Ganganagar</i>
1 Percentage of irrigated area to cultivated area	14.9	38.4
2 Per capita plan expenditure	Rs 6.40	Rs 68
3 Total cultivable area	662 lakh acres	48.7 lakh acres (7.35%)
4 Total cultivated area	375 lakh acres	34.8 lakh acres (9.3%)
5 Irrigated area ending 1967-68		
(a) By canals & tanks	25.18 lakh acres	13.35 lakh acres (53%)
(b) By wells	31 lakh acres	0.006 lakh acres (negligible)
TOTAL IRRIGATED AREA	56.18 lakh acres	13.36 lakh acres (24%)
6 Percentage of irrigated land as compared to cultivated area	14.9	38.4
7 Expenditure on irrigation and flood control works ending 1967-68	Rs 133 crores	Rs 166.41 crores (51%)
8 Total population (1961)	202 lakhs	10.4 lakhs
9 Density of population	153 per square metre	127 per square metre
10 <i>Per capita</i>		
(a) cultivated area	1.86	3.34
(b) Irrigated area	0.28	1.28
(c) Expenditure on works during Third Plan	Rs 68	Rs 640
(d) Production (based on 1965-66)	44.695 tons	16 lakh tons (36%)
(i) Value at Rs 750 per ton	Rs 336 crores	Rs 120 crores
(ii) Sugarcane quantity	7.7 lakh tons	2.60 lakh tons (35.51%)
Value at the rate of Rs 120	Rs 8.8 crores	Rs 3.1 crores
Cotton	2.78 lakh bales	1.34 lakh bales
Value at Rs 2000 per bale	Rs 55.5 crores	Rs 55.5 crores

On receipt of additional benefits due to further completion of Rajasthan Canal Project, the picture will be as follows:

(1) Percentage of irrigated area to cultivated area	67%
(2) Expenditure on irrigation and flood control works	Rs 76.41 crores
(3) <i>Per capita</i>	
(a) Irrigated area	2.2 acres
(b) Expenditure on irrigation works	Rs 735

Retrospect and Prospect

K. ARAVINDAKSHAN

THERE is a socialist nip in the New Delhi air this winter. This is but the natural aftermath of the inevitable split in the Congress party. Official spokesmen right from the Prime Minister downwards spare no pains to impress upon the masses that Indian socialism, as of old, will not remain "socialisation of the vacuum". A series of measures from Birla probe to land reforms are proposed to be initiated in right earnest, making thereby a complete departure from the erstwhile programme of "radicalism in principle and conservatism in practice".

Slogans and Promises

The people of India who have had enough of these slogans and promises in the past still remain sceptical about the meaningful implementation of any of these programmes. This scepticism is all the more pronounced in the case of agrarian reforms which have been an integral part of the Congress party programme well before the dawn of Independence and the launching of the Five-year plans. The Congress Election Manifesto of 1946 called for "the removal of intermediaries between the peasant and the state". The objective of fixing a ceiling on individual holdings became Congress policy by the end of 1947. As Dr Ronald Segal remarks "Land to the Tiller had been the cry of Congress struggle and became the promise of Congress rule" (*The Crisis of India*, p. 204).

This cry is being repeated now, off and on, with added vehemence and political undertones, as part of the power struggle which shows no sign of abatement.

After Independence, the Planning Commission, taking its cue from Jawaharlal Nehru, started to swear by land reforms. More than two decades ago, it was stated with the widest possible fanfare, that radical agrarian reforms must be taken up for the achievement of a two-fold objective "To remove such impediments to increase in agricultural productivity as arise from the agrarian structure inherited from the past. This should help create conditions for evolving as speedily as possible an agricultural economy with high levels of efficiency and productivity," and "To eliminate all elements of exploitation and social injustice within the agrarian system, to provide security for the tiller of the soil and assure

equality of status and opportunity to all sections of the rural population."

On the basis of these two broad objectives, the first to five-year plans outlined the following salient features of land reforms: (i) Abolition of intermediaries, (ii) Tenancy reforms and reduction of rents; (iii) Fixation of ceiling on agricultural holdings, and (iv) Agrarian reorganisation which includes consolidation of holdings, land management practices, development of co-operative farming and cooperative village management. The land reforms policy pursued during the Third Plan period was only a continuation of the pattern already adopted in the First and Second Plan periods.

In most of the States, legislative measures have been adopted for the abolition of intermediaries, regulation of tenancies and fixation of ceiling on land holdings. But only those who are on the lunatic fringe would concede that the progress made on these lines has been satisfactory. Even an ordinary observer of Indian agrarian scene knows fully well that there has been much tardiness in the implementation of these reforms in their proper spirit.

Lennin has rightly said, if the responsibility for the implementation of a progressive law rested on the bureaucracy and the vested interests, the peasant would not get anything. This is what has happened in India, too. How did this come about? What has been its "modus operandi"?

Policy Objectives Frustrated

The Central Government, through the agency of the Planning Commission and the annual rituals like the meetings of the National Development Council, enunciates certain general principles or guidelines on which the State Governments have to act, and act decisively, so that land reform measures do not remain a dead letter. But, the powers-that-be at the State level have seldom passed the stage of slogan-mongering and chanting of pious platitudes. They have framed laws in such a way that they frustrate the very objectives of land policy. For example, in the matter of ceiling legislation, big landlords who have a stranglehold over the State Governments, have been allowed to circumvent the reform with impunity by free parcelling out their land among their kith and kin through illegal transactions.

Lacunae in the administrative machinery have led to the re-emergence of tenancies. According to

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Professor V.M. Dandekar, "It is becoming clear that it is in fact impossible to abolish tenancy, while the existing tenancies are being abolished by a transfer of ownership to the tenants, new tenancies continue to be created and they will have to be continually dealt with." ("From Agrarian Reorganisation to Land Reforms," *Artha Vijnana*, Poona, March 1964)

This phenomenon is the result of the absence of a machinery to keep close watch over tenant landlord relationship. A committee set up at the Centre for this purpose towards the end of the Second Plan, with the Agriculture Minister as Chairman, was shelved along with the "Plan Holiday"

The continuance of such loopholes perpetuates concentration of land monopoly, intensification of semi-feudal exploitation along with the steady growth of capitalist relations and aggravation of rural tensions. According to one estimate, even now 47 per cent of rural households either own no land or own less than one acre of land each, their share of total land being one per cent, 74 per cent of households either own no land or own less than five acres of land each and their share of total land is 16 per cent, the share of 2.5 per cent of rural households, each owning 30 acres or more of land comes to 28 per cent of the total land area of the country, while about one per cent of the households owning more than 40 acres each, hold 20 per cent of the total area.

In some of the States, the limit of ceiling is fixed so high that very little surplus land is available for redistribution. To what extent the old feudal relations continue, despite loud protestation to the contrary, can be seen from the following overt admission of the Planning Commission: "The main object of ceilings which is to redistribute land to the landless at a reasonable price on a planned basis, has been largely defeated. In the absence of any reliable data, it would also be difficult to say that as a result of transfers much land has passed into the hands of agricultural labourers or small farmers" (*The Draft Outline of the Fourth Plan*)

Feudal Practices Continue

That the old feudal practices such as illegal leasing of land, continue unhindered even today, has been confirmed by Professor Gunnar Myrdal: "Whether the rearrangement in the agrarian structure generated by the eviction of tenants by landowners attempting to evade ceiling legislation will have favourable effects on output is still more problematical. Cases in which larger landholders have changed their traditional behaviour patterns by taking a direct interest in farming and by introducing technical improvements are not unknown—particularly in Punjab, Gujarat, Andhra and Mysore—but they are not common. Not only does abstinence from work, even of a supervisory character, remain attractive for reasons of status, but the economic returns obtainable from expenditure on agricultural improvements may not be sufficient to compete with those obtainable from more passive activities such as money-lending and trading. The result has often been the substitution of sharecroppers for tenants who enjoyed a more secure position" (*Asian Drama*, Vol. II)

In short, the present agrarian situation boils down to the fact that feudal exploitation which has been more profitable than profit-earning through capitalist methods or direct participation in farm operations, continues in an unfettered manner.

The charlatans of capitalist farming and feudalism hasten to justify the existing arrangement on the ground that larger farms are more productive than smaller ones. But the reports on farm management studies undertaken by the Union Ministry of Food and Agriculture paint an altogether different picture. Analysing the farm management data, Erven J. Long observes: "In India, crude observation does not suggest that the level of farming practices is higher on the larger than on the smaller farms." With the exception of the highly specialised case of some of the plantation crops, productivity per acre would appear to be about the same for all sizes of farms or perhaps to diminish, as the size of farms increases" (Quoted in *Economic Affairs*, Fourth Plan Symposium Number, July-August 1969, p. 360)

Fourth Plan Evasive

Under the average conditions of soil, climate and crop-pattern, a holding of five to seven acres may be taken as a family holding and on the basis of this, the ceiling limit must be fixed at 25 acres. In many of the States the upper limit is higher than this, with the result that very little land is left for redistribution among the landless. It really passes one's understanding why the Fourth Plan Draft which makes much ado about transfer of ownership to tenants, settlement of landless agriculturists and reorganisation of farms, totally evades the insistence upon a lower ceiling. Even in the case of plantations, land in excess of the bona fide requirements of planters should be brought under the purview of ceiling legislation.

The false claims regarding the progress of land reforms in the States presented by some of the Chief Ministers at their last New Delhi conference clearly reveal the fact that they are reluctant to quicken the pace of implementation. They do not want to upset the existing arrangement in which a firm alliance has been built up over the years by the so-called socialists who are at the helm of affairs in the States and the vested interests both of whom have a high stake in case the Centre insists upon or time-bound crash programme of land legislation. It was therefore, quite natural that they made every attempt to stall the issue by putting forth inflated claims of implementation of land reforms.

The Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister stoutly opposed any drastic change in the ceiling, while the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh put up the claim that land reforms had been fully implemented in his State. In contrast to this, the Revenue Ministers of Kerala and West Bengal and to a certain extent the representative from Tamil Nadu struck a different note and warned the Central Government against any attempt to deal with the problems of tenants and sharecroppers in a cavalier fashion as in the past.

The representatives of the United Fronts of Kerala and West Bengal blamed the Central Government for the delay in the implementation of land reforms. Despite the fact that agriculture is a State Subject, the Centre has a three-fold responsibility in the matter of land reforms. For one thing, the States are not entirely free to act on their own, because the State laws need the Centre's clearance. Hence there is a lot of delay, more often than not, due to political reasons. When the first Communist Ministry of Kerala enacted the Land Reforms Bill, the Centre took more than a year to send it back with its comments and suggestions for amendment. Again, recently when the Kerala Land Reforms (Amendment) Bill was put to the Centre for its prior concurrence, it took six months to communicate its views.

Another respect in which the States need active assistance from the Centre relates to the legal and constitutional entanglements. Powerful vested interests take shelter behind the Fundamental Rights clauses in the Constitution in order to sabotage the spirit of land reforms. The only way to cross this hurdle is to amend the Constitution and keep land reforms out of the purview of the Fundamental Rights. Another equally serious issue is the veiled attempt to preserve the vestiges of feudalism in the guise of proprietary rights enjoyed by religious and charitable institutions. It is high time the authorities concerned realised that some of the religious and charitable institutions and trusts are worse than feudal lords in their treatment of the tenants.

The problem of conducting a comprehensive land survey and preparation of up-to-date land records is an essential prerequisite for the implementation of land reforms. It is said that except in Uttar Pradesh, no such survey has been undertaken for quite some time. Most of the States are not at present in a position to defray huge funds for this purpose. It is, therefore, imperative that the Centre comes to the rescue of the States by underwriting such expenditure at least on a deferred payment basis. The newly nationalised commercial banks can undertake this job provided the Centre takes the initiative. Without the necessary spadework, mere introduction of land reforms will be wide off the mark.

Institutional Credit Agencies

Similarly, there is urgent need to strengthen the institutional credit agencies so that the benefits accruing from transfer of land ownership do not go in vain. Here too, the nationalised banking sector can be highly effective.

Things being such, one is constrained to say that whatever may be the impact of radical slogans like a ceiling on income and urban property, a probe into the Birla assets (the issue, it seems, is in the cold storage for the moment), nationalisation of import-export trade, and so on, the real test for the present Government will be to prove to what extent it will succeed in ensuring social justice in the countryside. There is now the growing feeling that the much-bluffed-about "green revolution", para-

doxically enough, has only accentuated rural disparities. Wolf Ladejnsky, a keen observer of agrarian problems, recently asserted that "if the condition of the landless, the sharecroppers and the small farmers undergoes no change, they could just possibly turn to raising hell as easily as raising crops."

The recent study of the Union Home Ministry about the disturbing rural situation, confirms this well-considered view. The 10,000-word study issues the forthright warning "The problem has to be tackled on a wide front effectively and imaginatively. Failure to do so may lead to a situation where the discontented elements are compelled to organise themselves and the extreme tensions building up within the 'complex molecule', that is the Indian village, end in an explosion." It was in this background that the Home Minister, Sri Y.B. Chavan had, in a dramatic manner, warned the State Chief Ministers, on whom, in the final analysis, the onus of implementation of land reforms rests. "Unless the green revolution is based on social justice, I am afraid the green revolution may not remain green."

Discontent Among Tribals

Enchanted by the euphoria created by the so-called "green revolution", the question of land reforms should not be relegated to the background. Increase in agricultural production does not depend upon a small number of capitalist farmers who are the chief beneficiaries of the "green revolution", but on a large number of small independent farmers. Therefore, land must be quickly transferred from passive rent-receivers to active small farmers.

Particular attention must be bestowed, in this connection, upon the welfare of the tribals and the root causes of their mounting discontent. To quote the Home Ministry Report "The condition of the tribals merits special mention. Laws enacted in the earlier years of the twentieth century to protect the land owned by the tribals from alienation had not been effectively implemented in various States, particularly in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa. As a result, a large number of tribals have been deprived of their land." The signs of violence against the landlords and other vested interests so widespread among the Gijans in Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh, tribals in Gopiballabhpur in West Bengal, Chotanagpur area of Bihar and Koraput district in Orissa are the result of this sordid state of affairs. There is no use in putting the blame for all these on the Left extremists and Naxalites.

Attempts like these to water down the seriousness of the problem of rural discontent will ultimately threaten the very fabric of Indian society which has withstood many an acid test in the past, but which may eventually be forced to give in to continuous onslaughts. Organised efforts to maintain the status quo, spearheaded by the vested interests and their propagandists should never be permitted to slacken the pace of land reforms. They brook no delay.

DISCUSSION

Professor Hiren Mukerjee's article, "Stalin: A Plea for Revaluation" (*Mainstream* December 20, 1969), has provoked a number of contributions both for and against his viewpoint. So far *Mainstream* has published contributions by Dr P. C Gupta, Professor and Head of the Department of English, Allahabad University, and Sri Sumit Sarkar, Lecturer in History, Postgraduate Department, University of Calcutta (January 3, 1970), and by Gautam Chattopadhyay, Head of the Department of History, Surendra Nath College for Women, University of Calcutta, and Sri Katha Janardana Rao, (January 17, 1970). Two more contributions, from the well-known writer and author in Hindi, Sri Manmathnath Gupta, and Sri Sudipta Kaviraj, a young intellectual, are being published below.

He Completed Lenin's Work

MANMATHNATH GUPTA

I think it very conragious on the part of Prof Hiren Mukerjee to have reopened the ticklish question of Stalin and his place in history. I remember the day when I read that Khrushchev had denounced Stalin. I thought and I am certain that many people who had followed the glorious history of Russia since the Revolution, that this news was downright forgery on the pattern of the famous non-existent Riga correspondent of the Western press

It gradually dawned that the news was not concocted, but Khrushchev had really denigrated Stalin. His speeches on Stalin coming one after the other plunged me into the darkest despair for some time. Suddenly the ground seemed to give way beneath me. I had utilised many quotations from Stalin's various books in my six hundred page book on *Dialectical Materialism* (Hindi) published by the Indian Press Allahabad. It had an introduction by Acharya Narendra Deva dated January 29, 1947, that means it was published just before Independence. Acharya was then the only person among eminent Hindi writers who understood the subject thoroughly.

Naturally I scanned the book once more in a spirit of self-criticism and I found that Stalin as quoted was right in every context. I also pored over his book *Problems of Leninism* in the same spirit, and I did not find any passage in which Stalin appeared to have misunderstood or misrepresented Marxism-Leninism. It would be a bold man who would say that Stalin departed from Leninism in any part of his book. His understanding of the theory was perfect and to use a cliché, it left nothing to be desired.

In that Hindi book I also used quotations from *Russian Revolution* by Leon Trotsky and *Historical Materialism* by Bukharin. Here is the crux of the problem. I can, of course, bypass this imbroglio by saying that as far as my references were concerned, they were of such a nature that there could be no difference of opinion. This oversimplified situation, however, would not solve the problem.

Trotsky and Bukharin are two prominent examples. One had to flee the country and the other was tried and liquidated. Khrushchev did not come to,

the rescue of any of these men; to that extent his denunciation was lopsided and incomplete, but history cannot turn a blind eye to this affair. I shall come to my solution of the problem later on, but first of all let me formulate the problem as it appeared before me.

Khrushchev's bulldozing statements denouncing Stalin as almost an unmitigated villain did not stop after peeling off the image of Stalin, as probably he intended, it went on to erode Communist leadership, in particular Russian Communist leadership and what was worse, it went on to point a dagger menacingly at the vitals of Marxism-Leninism. The world capitalist press, that is, the so-called free press, welcomed the statements of Khrushchev on this point with ill-concealed glee, expecting that he would oblige them, later on by denouncing socialism. But Khrushchev was a good socialist, he refused to go beyond the personality cult.

In spite of this subjective brake, I was always of the opinion that his out right denunciation of Stalin objectively did learn the cause of socialism to some extent. The so-called movement for the liberalisation of socialism, which is liberal to the enemies of socialism and not to its friends (who wish to sublimate to world communism and thence march on to a classless society in which the state will wither away) received much impetus from Khrushchev's denunciation. Capitalists and their henchmen throughout the world will be very happy if socialist states all over the world, specially the USSR and China, are liberalised to the extent that they are sucked back into the vortex of capitalism.

The explanation that Stalin was allright up to 1935 and then suddenly something happened is very inadequate and almost childish. One must explain what is that something. Is that something outside the pale of reasoning and cannot be explained in a coherent manner. If so, I think this explanation is worse than the enigma. Contrary to this theory of his being allright upto 1935, I believe as a humble student of history that Stalin's leadership during the Second World War was the brightest part of his life.

and it is as a result of this leadership that there have come up so many socialist countries in the world. Judged from even a pragmatic machtpolitik point of view also, he emerged as a greater leader of his country than Hitler, Churchill, Roosevelt or Tojo. If the USA emerged as the first power after the Second World War, this was because the war was not fought on the American soil. In spite of this handicap it was a neck-to-neck race and the USSR is not behind the USA in any way if human values are included.

For judging Stalin (or any other Communist or Socialist leader, I propose a single criterion, which includes all other minor criteria—Did the USSR under his leadership march from victory to victory in industry, agriculture, military power, science, technology? I am deliberately not including the arts and literature, although I would include dissemination and proper understanding of the arts and literature. Judged by this criterion Stalin comes out with flying colours. Apart from the above list of achievements, he solved the difficult problem of the kulaks. But for this there could have been a throw back to capitalism.

In solving all these problems he had to be ruthless. Broadly speaking I think ruthlessness was the only course open to him. Unfortunately the method of sweet reasonableness and persuasion is not productive of quick results. We know by our own experience that in such an universally accepted matter as prohibition of child marriage and the ban on untouchability, we have not succeeded in spite of years of propaganda from every conceivable platform. We know what hurdles we are encountering in the sphere of family planning. I think without compulsion ruthlessness we are not going to succeed. I have no patience for slow methods, because in the meantime the problem multiplies. People concede that ruthlessness is a feature of revolution. Of course there are people like Pasternak, who cannot stomach surgical violence, confusion and ruthlessness. That is why I do not like *Dr Zhivago* in spite of its artistic excellence and psychologically successful depiction which concentrates on the aspects of ruthlessness and keeps only that part of revolution in focus blacking out the beneficial facets of revolution.

If we conceive of revolution as a process confined to say one day or at the most ten days that shook the world, then of course ruthlessness and violence have to cease after this period. But this I think is a vitiated view of revolution. Revolution does not cease after capturing the machinery of the State. The machine has to be used actively in a revolutionary manner to reap the harvest following a revolution. A revolution has to be followed by smaller revolutions and explosions. The French Revolution did not achieve full fruition because it was bogged down in legalism and clash of individuals. Of course at the rock bottom, economic forces worked and pulled it down.

Fortunately the leaders of the Russian Revolution did not think that their work ceased on the November 7, 1917. To them revolution was a continuous process. Lenin laid the foundation. The man who followed him had to build extensively over it. There were so many among Lenin's followers, who could

have succeeded him. But Stalin succeeded him. Although we had no revolution, we know how Lal Bahadur succeeded Nehru and how he was succeeded by Indira. Merit counts, but other things count more; and from the point of view of a party man, it matters little who succeeds the master, granted that the successor carries on the party policy. Suppose Jagjivanram had succeeded Nehru instead of Lal Bahadur, would it have made much difference? So it did not matter if Stalin got into power. To me the only question is whether Stalin led the party in such a manner as to consummate (I am using the language of marriage) socialism quickly to produce the best of results on the home as well as the international front.

Now I come to the most difficult aspect of Stalin's line, the liquidation of the rivals, that is, the old guard. There is no reason to suppose that a member of the old guard, who understood theory as thoroughly as Bukharin would *epso facto* advocate the correct policy in a particular situation. Here is a *prima facie* case against him. I am quoting from Stalin's *The Right Deviation in the CPSU*.

"Evidently Rykov and Bukharin are on principle opposed to the employment of any emergency measures against the kulaks. But that is bourgeois liberal policy, not Marxian policy.... The adherents of Bukharin's group hope to persuade the class enemy voluntarily to forego his interests and voluntarily to deliver his grain surpluses. They hope that kulak, who has grown stronger, who is profiteering, who is able to hold out by selling other products and who conceals his grain surpluses—they hope that this kulak will give his grain surpluses voluntarily at our purchase prices. Have they lost their senses? It is not obvious that they do not understand the mechanism of the class struggle, that they do not know what classes are."

This is a serious charge in a country which is in deadly haste to solve its problems.

I will go further. Even if it is conceded that all these leaders were equally great revolutionaries, the existence of too many leaders of the same calibre—if they were not cooperating and trying to pull down the installed leadership by say an appeal to the kulaks—may not be an unqualified boon. Take the antagonism between Patel and Nehru, then take the classes between Tandon and Nehru, Kripalani and Nehru; they resulted only in valuable time being lost. Of course this is not a good example, but it gives us some insight into the affairs in Russia. Suppose some of the rivals of Nehru had also entered into a conspiracy with a foreign power to topple him. Then how can Stalin alone be blamed personally for the trials? The leaders were regularly tried in lower courts, evidence was produced often fortified with confessions by the accused. Is it supposed that the judges, the witnesses, the jailers all conspired to convict the old guard? And this went on for years and years. This can happen in fascism, but can it happen in socialism? It amounts to a condemnation of the CPSU and also the USSR in general. It also amounts to a condemnation of the socialist system itself, under which such a state of affair can go on for decades.

So, my conclusion is that Stalin was completely

loyal to socialism, he was a worthy successor of Lenin (I have already said that some others in Lenin's entourage, given the opportunity, could have probably been as worthy) Stalin followed a ruthless policy to get quick results, which he got, in all his ruthless policies he carried the party along with him. In spite of all this, I however suspect that in certain cases he was more ruthless than the case called for,

but to substantiate this a life-time of unbiased research on the spot is called for. I think the Russian Revolution was fortunate in getting Stalin after Lenin, but I think had Stalin not been available, somebody else as great would have been produced by Russia. He also would have been as ruthless or he would have failed to build Russia.

For a Dialectical Approach

SUDIPTA KAVIRAJ

2

THIS is not a reply to Stalin's critics, only a criticism of their approach. For, under a mistaken inspiration, they are criticising not only his faults, but also his achievements. This inspiration allegedly comes from the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party (1956). Actually, rather from a misreading of its thesis. Stalin did not live alone, and so cannot be judged in isolation. He led a particular country in a particular period against the particular difficulties of the time. The mistakes of that period were great, but its achievements still greater, and the faults do not take away from the achievements. I have defended only Stalin's achievements, not his mistakes.

Most historical individuals leave behind them work of a mixed character. Historians often try to make out of them complete successes or complete failures—according to their preferences. That has been exactly the case with Stalin. He has been called the man who saved socialism, also the man who nearly wrecked it; the author of its greatest victories, and also of its great mistakes, alternately. The truth, I am afraid, is not all one way or the other, but mixed, faults in spite of achievements, achievements despite faults.

In the period of the cult of personality men often took an unbalanced view of Stalin's role; after 1966 in a different view, though unbalanced in a new way. Certainly Stalin committed mistakes, but his critics were not free from them. In our country, dogmatists believed—and still do—in a falsely sublime view of Stalin's career; revisionists in a contrary theory, though equally false. The truth lay in the appreciation of the mixed character of his legacy.

The Soviet historians are slowly coming round to this view—and being misunderstood from two sides. Dogmatists accuse them of being too critical of Stalin, revisionists for being too generous. It is an error to believe that Soviet history is now coming to defend Stalin's errors. They are doing nothing of the sort, they are bringing the correct perspective back once more. They are counteracting the excuses done by some historians on Stalin's excuses—some of them real, some imaginary.

EVERY assessment of a historical individual must be a historical assessment. The work of a personality must be judged always keeping in mind its constant relativity to the conditions in which he had worked. Another truth, well known to Marxists but too often forgotten about Stalin, is the dialectical relation between the leading individual and the movement which he led.

It is difficult to write about that part of the present where it shades off into the past, Stalin belongs to that time.

Stalin was certainly one of the most eminent figures of the twentieth century, though his enemies believe, only for his mistakes. It is not so. He lived through one of the most significant periods of history, and was one of its most significant men. He came to power at one of the most difficult periods for Soviet Russia, when he died he left a very much altered world behind him; so fundamentally altered that he himself failed to understand its depth. He has left his stamp on our world in a much deeper way than did Churchill or Roosevelt. His personal life was an epic of strength, grit and determination, though there was another side of the epic too. Towards the end of his life he developed vices, but curiously, his vices were the excess of his virtues. When he came to the Communist movement, the Socialist State was a long way in the future, when he died it was too firmly present for the liking of anti-communists. He played a great role in this great transition, though not as great as Lenin's. As Lenin's name was connected with the coming of the socialist state into history, so Stalin's was with the period of socialist construction. The relation between these two periods is unfortunately still left vague.

Stalin was a mysterious personality in life. He was one of the persons who remain a problem to the historians after their death. A final assessment of his work is still wanting. Perhaps it is true that the correct assessment of a personality cannot be made by his contemporaries. His role gets clearer the more we get away from him, we gain new facts and a better perspective to condition them.

For history is not only a matter of facts, but also of perspective

Soviet history has shown a lack of certainty in its attitude about Stalin. It gave a superlative assessment of Stalin in 1953, reinterpreted it in 1956, and is in the way of reinterpreting in 1970 its own reinterpretation of 1956. It is a good sign. It shows that the problem of Stalin is not settled, and they are quite aware of it. They do not shrink from a criticism of the earlier attitude of their history which somehow regarded the problem as finally settled, in 1953 in Stalin's favour, after 1956, against him. This excess of certainty itself showed that the problem was unsettled. This oscillation could be explained too. The Russians have been directly concerned with Stalin. They had either gained by him or had suffered. Accordingly they felt a rush of anger or sympathy, both equally irrepressible. The name of Stalin does not stir our passions, only our intellect. Opinion in our country followed Soviet theory, differed from it only by its lack of restraint. Two legends of Stalin appeared in our country—a legend of love, and a legend of hate. They shared the common feature of being legends. The problem of Stalin is more difficult than it is commonly believed. For it is to be an assessment not only of a man, but of the whole period when he was in leadership.

3

STALIN was converted to Communism at fifteen, and worked for it all his life. In 1897, a socialist society existed only in the hopes of Russian activities, in 1953 as the greatest reality of our time. For Communism it was one of the most difficult periods, if also one of the most successful. And he played a great role in turning these difficulties into successes. His contribution in building socialism both in theory and in translating them into practice, fell a long way short of Lenin's. It was also a long way ahead of any one else's of his time. It was Lenin who conducted the revolution. It was Lenin too who laid out the theoretical blueprint for socialist construction, it was not Stalin's invention. He later developed this theory in some ways, some times in wrong ways. But his great contribution was as the continuator of Lenin's work, translating his theory into practice, completing the work he had left unfinished. Stalin's task was to carry the revolution into all the layers of Russian society. It was a great task to do. And he succeeded in general, though he also made grave mistakes. Still, they were not so grave as to affect the socialist quality of the new society. Most of the time, his mistakes lay not in the theory which he wanted to execute, but in the way he executed them. As in collectivization, a bad technique often blurred the good aim.

Often, he put Lenin's theories into wrong uses. And his sticking to the letter of Lenin's teachings sometimes went against the spirit. Stalin and Bukharin shared a common deficiency, though not in the same measure. They underrated the dialectical quality of Lenin's thought¹. He remained faithful to Lenin's theory till the end in a literal, not in a

creative way. And therefore this adherence sometimes became merely abstract and formal. He gave all importance to the form, little to the content, the living content of theory which needed constant creative development in response to changing circumstances. For instance, Lenin had said that immediately after the Bolshevik capture of power, class struggle in Russia would sharpen². It was meant to be true for a temporary transition period. Stalin took it to be true for all time. In the effect, the nature of the Soviet rule went on being very and unnecessarily, harsh.

A same kind of mistake has been pointed out by Varga³. Lenin had written in 1917 that inter-imperialist contradictions would inevitably turn into wars. After 1945 Stalin continued to believe in this theory literally though he lived in a very changed world, and changed because of successful Soviet policy. It was his own work though he failed to understand it. Capitalist countries had fought two world wars between them. Out of the first came Soviet Russia, out of the second, the world system of socialism. Naturally, it was very doubtful if they could still afford a third one at this cost. Stalin, apparently true to Lenin's doctrine, believed they would. Varga, taking the spirit of Leninism in an altered world, thought they would not. Stalin's literal adherence to the letter of Leninism became a way of violating it. It balked all creative development in theory. It applied mechanically the perceptions of dialectical materialism.

Sometimes the way of distortion was a little different, though the effect was the same. There was another way of violating Leninism sticking to it in theory, violating it in practice. That was Stalin's favourite way. He said the correct thing, did quite another. That was a reason why those who felt his policies knew where the error was, those who merely read about it, could not. "Hence, the practical activity of the party of the proletariat must not be based on the wishes of 'outstanding individuals', not on dictates of 'reason', universal morals etc, but on the laws of development of society and study of these laws"⁴. It is ironical to read in Stalin, for later in his leadership policies were often determined on "the wishes of outstanding individual" rather than a study of social laws. Sometimes he made the error of substituting his knowledge of Marxist philosophy of history in general for the study of historical situations in the concrete. Sometimes, he showed a tendency to equate the lines of historical evolution with his own rather restricted notions about them. He was not the equal of Lenin in personal qualities, still less in historical significance, though it was the favourite mistake of Marxists then or their favourite illusion.

4

THE task for Lenin was to bring the Socialist State into existence, for Stalin to make it continue to exist in the face of a hostile capitalist world. In 1917, Russia was the least advanced country in Europe, she was to be turned into the

most advanced one in fifty years. Collectivisation of agriculture and the industrial drive were completed under Stalin's leadership, also a complete reversal of the pattern of international relations

When Stalin came into leadership, the internal situation in Russia was extremely difficult. He overcame these difficulties, but never forced himself from their impressions. He never ceased to live in the world of sharpening class-struggles. He did not have false notions about the class-forces in 1929, but they were no longer true in the worlds of thirty years later. In the early period capitalist resistance sharpened, because it was frantic. He beat it down most efficiently, and so it had to cease sometime. For in Russia there was not an inexhaustible supply of kulaks and capitalists. After 20 years it was an exceedingly lucky kulak who had got away. His policies of liquidation were to cease for the simple reason that they were so great a success. Theoretically also, with the liquidation of the exploiting classes, the class-forces or the relations of production forming the economic basis of society must have changed. But the corresponding change in the political structure—an expansion of socialist democracy failed to come off. They had to wait till the 20th Congress of CPSU (1956).

Stalin dekulakized not merely kulaks, but unfortunately also those who were not—merely innocent peasants. The machinery of repression which was to be turned against capitalists were sometimes turned against Communists. It was Stalin's greatest error. The interest of the peasants lay on the side of the workers, their only crime was they were slow in realising it. They were not politically mischievous, only mistaken, often merely confused. They were not given the time to correct their mistakes. Sholokhov pointed it out⁵. Stalin told him not to meddle in politics, on his own side, he never hesitated in meddling in literature. Socialism was strengthened, but at the cost of partial stifling of socialist democracy. Khrushchov, in spite of his criticism, drew the lessons Stalin had failed to draw about his own actions. For the State of the entire people, Stalin had created the preconditions.

5

ACHIEVEMENTS of the Stalin period had revolutionised not only Russian Society, in international relations it had caused no less of a revolution. Indeed, the first revolution caused the second, though Stalin never realised it in full.

Before the Second World War, Russia was a suspect power. Westerners wondered if she had the power to become a Power. The war settled the problem. They had their doubts whether Soviet Russia could hold out against Germany and how long. Later it turned out to be their problems, not Stalin's. Russia saved not only herself, but the whole capitalist West though they were not grateful enough to admit it. At the start of the war it was doubted if Soviet Russia could survive without Western help; later it turned out that the West could not have survived without the Soviet eastern front.

More truthful historians now admit that the war was won in the East, not in the West. It all proves Stalin was a great leader in war, but he was also an equally great leader in peace. If he had won the war for the Soviet Union, he had also won for her the previous twenty years of peace. In a way, building in the peace period helped the victory in war later on. War leadership demands certain qualities, peace certain others. Stalin was the only statesman of the period who had the rare combination of both. For winning the peace was not a mere rhetoric. Peace had to be won by a mixture of strength and diplomacy from a capitalist Europe which was trying to turn the Fascist menace on to the East instead of the West.

The Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939 was a success for Stalin, not a blunder. Those who criticised it did not take into account the conditions in which it was made. It paid the West back in its own coin, and naturally they did not like this treatment. The Western powers had been trying to turn Germany's attack to the East, it deflected it to the West, though only for a time. The Western statesmen felt cheated of their diplomatic victory at Munich. They called it immoral only when Stalin did what they had long tried to do, without success. But the background of diplomacy could not be more different. Stalin had made repeated offers to the western powers for a United Front against Fascism, they had studiously avoided it. The defeatists called the pact a piece of defeatism. But Stalin could not be blamed for it any more than Lenin could be for Brest-Litovsk.

Some say that Stalin was wrong not in making the pact with Germany, but in overrating it. He even went to the limit of instructing the resistance movements to step down their anti-Fascist activities. Soviet defence preparations were less than satisfactory in 1941. It was a tremendous mistake, and a strange one for a Marxist to fall in. Yet he made it, and it took its toll in terms of precious human lives. Still, it was an error of tactics, not of overall strategy. Its only justification can be that it did not make victory impossible.

6

1945 was a turning point in Stalin's career. It had a double significance. Apparently, it was the time of his greatest successes, deeper in, it was the time from when his failures began to show. This failure itself was of a peculiar character. It lay less in the realm of achievement, more in the realm of adjusting his theory to new conditions created by his party's achievements. The Soviet Union was responsible for creating the new world of 1945 more than anyone else. Her leader failed to measure the depth of this change. There was a great difference between the world before the war and the world after it. The world socialist system was born. Communist movements had grown up in the capitalist countries. The anti-imperialist movement in the colonies was taking on an anti-capitalist orientation. Taken together, they caused a reversal of the pattern of international relations. The credit for its creation goes to the Soviet party under Stalin's

leadership, for its recognition to the 20th Congress under Khrushchov's. The relations of forces had changed not momentarily, but permanently in favour of socialism. Unfortunately, Socialists under Stalin did not realise this truth. Stalin's notions were right in the pre-war world, they went wrong after it. There were certain extenuating circumstances. hardly had one war ended when Churchill was making mental preparations for the next; the Americans were using their crucial, though shortlived, atomic monopoly.

Yet, nothing can condone Stalin for believing in wrong theories, and leading others to believe them. He should not have been obsessed by the immediate difficulties, but should have analysed the "social forces" use as he had said himself ten years earlier. He did not do so. This lends peculiarity to his error. In fact, Stalin did not fail in constructing Socialism, rather, he failed in understanding he had been so tremendously successful. He overrated his own personality, so paid the price by actually underrating his own and his parties achievement. His own cult stood against its realization. It was once more Khrushchov who made a better assessment of the Stalin period than did Stalin himself.

The Personality cult was a distortion of history. The official biography of Stalin published in 1954, was one its best pieces. It was an attempt by scholars to find a beautiful reason for each one of Stalin's actions. It ended by creating a fable of Stalin's life, a straight line of successes. The Soviet Party had achieved great success, only to give them, by a collective consent, to its leader. Stalin had got rid of not only the anti-socialist opposition of Trotskyites but also of socialist criticism. The war a period helped in this proviso by the abnormalcy of its demands. Abnormalcies in party democracy became so normal as to go unnoticed. An uncritical attitude to history and the Cult of Personality fostered each other.

In 1927, Stalin himself had said: "And what is Stalin? He is a minor figure".⁶ In his biography, in 1950, it was said, "Stalin is the Lenin of to-day".⁷ He showed his consent by silence. After his death, on March 9, in Red Square, Malenkov called him "the greatest genius of humanity"⁸, without qualification of time and space, so presumably of all times. Mao-tse Tung, writing a week later, said he was "the greatest genius of our time;"⁹ it all depends on what you mean by "our time". If it meant the period of Socialist construction it was certainly true, if it meant the 20th Century (which it probably did) it was as certainly wrong. Malenkov's speech was itself an example of the undialectical thought Stalin had encouraged when in his favour. It was not Malenkov's own mistake, but of the whole generation. It talked of Stalin only in superlatives. Mao-tse Tung's words did not take into account the relative roles of Lenin and Stalin, a problem about which it is almost a crime for a Marxist to be silent. Theory was no longer inductive, it was turned deductive instead. Stalin was not great because he said true things, a thing was true because Stalin had said it.

Stalin himself had very definite ideas about his place in history. But he was careful enough not to express them. It comes through very clearly not in what he himself said, but what he let others say for him. Beria called it the "Stalin age"¹⁰, though there was none to the name of Lenin. He was not the equal of Lenin in any respect, though this was the mistake Marxists then were so fond of making. He had succeeded for so long that he drifted into believing it was impossible for him to fail. He was also led by those he led into believing this. His contributions were undeniable, but they were more as a statesman than as a theorist. He believed it was the other way round. The whole generation behind in it too. Curiously, people who paid tributes to Stalin were not non-entities. Mao-tse Tung, Molotov, Malenkov were all commentably able men; their tributes may have been exaggerated, but curiously, they were not forced.

7

By his cult Stalin had hoped to get more credit for Soviet successes than was his due. In the end, he lost much. Malenkov's tenure was shortlived. He went from office along with his "greatest genius" ideas. The 20th Congress followed. It was a land-mark in the history of Soviet history. The historical perspective was changed, or rather brought back. Stalin's mistake regarding the international relations of forces were set right. The Personality Cult was contracted. This is the lasting contribution of the 20th Congress. It was not free from its drawbacks, though the reaction to personality cult was expected to be very sharp.

Stalin's error was not in his theory so much as in forgetting that theory needed change in changed conditions. If a theory succeeded it changed the given conditions, mixed with it, sank into the time. Theory had to change thoroughly precisely because it had succeeded so thoroughly. Theories are relative to circumstances. The communist movement needed to creatively change its theory in its new situation. The 20th Congress supplied this need. Khrushchov placed before it his famous "secret report", so secret that it first appeared in western journals within a week. It was apparently a commentary on Stalin's action, it was also a commentary on Khrushchov's feelings. Believers in Personality Cult had mixed feelings with historical judgement; Khrushchov too had so, though feelings of a different kind. Stalin was, very correctly, demoted in Soviet historical science. Stalingrad was, very wrongly, renamed Volgograd. It should have been left as it was, not for Stalin but in the memory of those who died there and created a turning-point in history. For it is not merely a piece of land, but a piece of history. It became the symbol of liberation from Fascism. It will remain so.

Khrushchov made a fundamental contribution to communist history. He brought back the role of the party. Stalin and the party was now to be treated together. In the period of the Cult, Stalin had always been in the limelight, the Party left in the shadow. The great successes of the Soviet Union

were in a great measure, victories of the Party which led the country. Khrushchov told this neglected truth very forcefully.

In reaction to the Cult, Khrushchov sometimes tended to fall into the opposite mistake. He wanted to have all the results, without the cause. Malenkov had been eloquent about Stalin's achievements, silent about his faults. Khrushchov was eloquent about the faults, silent about his victories. History was deliberately depersonalised, as if it was the story of social forces alone, not of persons. In Stalin's time, all the credit was transferred to Stalin, none to the party. Khrushchov gave all the credit to the party which was the leader of the people; he forgot to mention that Stalin was the leader of the party by its own choice. The dialectical quality of the relation was neglected, first in favour of Stalin, then in favour of the party. Khrushchov made a mistake in assessing Stalin's mistakes, and also unwillingly encouraged people who took the reassessment to absurd lengths. Stalin was turned into the dustbin of all errors. His name was mentioned only to criticise him. All crimes of the whole period were heaped upon him, all the mistakes, all the cruelties, only little success. As if the successes were historically inevitable, only the cruelties were not. The relation between the successes and the methods of bringing them off was forgotten. It was a neat division, all the successes should go to the party, and all the blame to Stalin. Stalin did a superhuman job after his death: he committed all the cruelties of a generation, all the mistakes over thirty years, supervised all the purges, locked the detainees, censored the novels. Stalin certainly gave the orders, but others must have obeyed. Or how did the whole machinery function? But the other side of equation is missing. You can not blame Stalin and make all others innocent. The meaning of Personality Cult is that the decision taking these years was personal, not collective. It was not merely Stalin's fault, but also of the Party. Stalin's fault was to over-step the limits of inner-party and Socialist democracy, the Party's fault was in failing to keep him within them. Khrushchov in some cases condemned Stalin, acquitted the Party. It was impossible. The Party helped Stalin in achieving successes, and so must share the glory. It also failed to prevent his excesses, and so must share the responsibility.

Khrushchov cited Lenin's "testament" in his speech before the 22nd Congress. And it has been picked up later by both sides and used through the art of mutilated quotations. Quotations were not only a literal, but also a historical content. Most of the time the one or the other was lost sight of. It turned out to be prophetic. But it was merely a comment on Stalin's tendencies. The defects have been alternately called political and personal. But they cannot be so separated. For personal failings may lead to political ones, as they did with Stalin. There was no man to replace Lenin. A person like him are the rare occurrences of history. The Party faced a dilemma which Lenin felt very keenly, and solved it as best as it could. Stalin may not have been the ideal candidate, but he was the least unsatis-

factory: I think the best available would be a happier expression. The Central Committee had to work with the personalities at its disposal and made the best use of it. Lenin's comments came to be prophetic. But they do not decide the issue one way or the other. Stalin had not in 1922 committed the mistake he did thirty years latter.

Some scholars want to go further. They would say not merely that Stalin committed mistakes, but that it was a mistake for the Soviet Party to elect him back in 1922. In their view, a downward revaluation of Stalin's role would as a corollary lead to an upward one of Trotsky's. Criticism of Stalin does not nullify the criticism of Trotsky, rather underlines it. Incidentally, they are drawing a conclusion from Khrushchov which he himself studiously avoided. To support Trotsky against Stalin would mean to call the fifty years of Soviet policy a mistake. Whatever Stalin's errors they never nullified the socialist character of society. Trotsky's line would have done exactly so. Such a line of criticism would be directed only apparently at Stalin, deeper in, against the Soviet system itself.

Khrushchov himself warned against this danger on November 6, 1957. "We Communists criticise the Personality Cult as being alien to Marxism-Leninism, as something intolerable in a Communist Party, in a socialist society. The Party is doing this to strengthen its position, and consolidate the socialist system. So that such things shall never occur again. But we cannot agree with those who try to use the criticism of the Personality Cult for attacks against the socialist system, against the Communist Party. While criticising the negative aspects of Stalin's activity the Party fought and will continue to fight all who slander Stalin, who on the pretext of criticising the Personality Cult, give an incorrect and distorted picture of period of our Party's activity when the Central Committee was headed by Stalin. As a devoted Marxist-Leninist and a staunch revolutionary, Stalin will occupy a worthy place in history. Our Party and the Soviet people will remember Stalin and pay tribute to him."¹¹ This is Khrushchov; one wishes he had always been so balanced.

Between the two periods there is a dialectical relation. Khrushchov's assessment of Stalin was a negation of the earlier one, and also more true. The Soviet historians at present are making a negation of the negation, this assessment being truer than Khrushchov's. Historical assessments have their reasons in history, and face their own historical assessments when the time comes. We are still intensely concerned with the problem of Stalin. For we can face the future only when we have understood our past. History is a dialectical movement. Every period in it is a criticism of the earlier one and also a sustenance of it. Between one period and another are the mixed connection of continuity and change. In a way, Khrushchov's period was an 'effect' of Stalin's. It continued the achievements, also corrected the mistakes. Though, Khrushchov tended to stress the side of difference more often. We are still concerned with the period of Stalin's leadership, the period of socialist construction—successful and painful. It has

left us a double effect. We are less concerned with it, but also more. What were the results of that period have become causes in ours. We have to work with what it left.

Stalin set a great example, not to be followed, but to be avoided. Marxism is a science, and like all sciences it may be wrongly handled. If a certain Marxist makes a mistake, or if a whole generation with him, it proves only him wrong, not the science. Marxism is a science of society. And, as a science, it makes reaching the truth more probable, but does not make mistakes impossible.

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to come out of the Soviet Union on Stalin's theories in general, and his economic theory in particular.

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¹¹Khrushchov, N.S. *Speech to the Jubilee Session of the Supreme Soviet* on November, 1957. See Khrushchov, N.S. *Socialism and Communism*, F.L.P.H., Moscow, 1963, p 148.

MANIPUR: GATHERING STORM (Continued from page 14)

development must get the importance it deserves. Industries have received a very low priority in the State's Budget. In 1967-68, the allocation for industries was Rs 15.17 lakhs, against Rs 286.39 lakhs for Police, Rs 44.79 lakhs for General Administration and Rs 174.02 lakhs for "miscellaneous public improvements".

The Industries Department is running without a Director of Industries for the last five years. Nobody knows what it is doing except maintaining its staff. The traditional handloom industry is declining. The products fetch good price in cities like Calcutta and Delhi, but the producers have to sell them cheap. Cooperative societies of the weavers will help them bargain for better prices.

The cold climate is ideally suited for industries producing photographic films and watches. Once there was a proposal to set up a watch factory in the Imphal Valley, but nothing materialized. Paper and sugar manufacture can also be profitably undertaken. But the emphasis should be on starting small scale industries in a big way.

Side by side, education has to be given a technical bias by opening polytechnics and technical training institutes. The pattern of education is completely out of tune with the socio-economic realities. For instance, there are 800 law students now in this small Territory. Not even a fraction of them can hope to earn a

living as a lawyer after passing their exams. They will only add to the problem of educated unemployment and swell the ranks of discontented young men.

A major objection to granting Statehood to Manipur is that it will increase administrative overheads out of proportion with the area. Apart from the fact that cost considerations cannot and do not override political considerations as is witnessed by the creation, first, of Nagaland, and now of Meghalaya, those thinking only in terms of financial implications should do well to calculate the cost of peace-keeping that may eventually have to be incurred if the cumulative effect of anger and frustration produces an explosion.

Lately, the centre has given some indication of its awareness of the gravity of the situation. The upgrading of the post of

Chief Commissioner to that of Lieutenant Governor, and converting the sub-divisions into full-fledged districts are two welcome measures. The districts are 1) Manipur East (comprising the former Ukhrul sub-division), 2) Manipur West (former Tamenglong), 3) Manipur South (former Churachandpur), 4) Manipur North (former Mao sub-division and the Sadar Hills) and 5) Manipur Central (comprising the Imphal Valley, Tengnoupal and Jiribam sub-divisions).

But halting and half-hearted measures introduced in reluctant doses, or mere protestations of sympathy, will not help much. The sympathy has to be demonstrated and translated into concrete action. It would be a pity if the political lesson of the Naga revolt is lost on the powers that be and past mistakes are repeated.

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BHILAI : FACTS AND FICTIONS (Continued from page 16)

The disparity between HSL's price and black-market price is so wide that there is a crying need to remedy the situation

While the HSL sells a tonne of steel for Rs 1200, it is reported that the blackmarket rate is about Rs 3,000. The same is the story about pig iron. The problem has become so acute that the Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan Governments have issued directives to stockists to declare their stocks

What is the impact of Bhilai on the regional economy? No studies have been done yet. And, hence, the foregoing are random observations.

Bhilai is an island in Madhya Pradesh. This may appear like an exaggeration, but it is largely true. The Plant is completely self-sufficient. Though it employs over 46,000 workers, the share of the region in employment is low, particularly in the skilled categories.

Integration Absent

Hence, there is not much outflow of money to the local region. And though Bhilai spends over a crore of rupees monthly on wages and salaries, the money is largely spent inside the township or sent out to other States.

The business premises inside the township were originally given to the local people, but as they had little resources to run modern shops, they sold the licences to outsiders. In fact opportunities just passed by the local people and they were unable to take advantage of them. And the State Government was least helpful to them.

The local people of course, are bitter, particularly those of Durg, an old dilapidated town, close to Bhilai. However, Raipur, some 20 miles away, being a larger town with modern amenities, has attracted some custom from Bhilai.

An engineering college at Raipur and a polytechnic at Durg were set up to train local boys with an eye for employment opportunities at the Bhilai Plant. But, today, Bhilai offers little scope for employment. In fact, the employment situation is stabilised. The students are very unhappy. It was not the fault of Bhilai.

If the local people failed to get a fair share of the jobs, there was also a failure in securing other benefits. Durg offers a classic example of how an undeveloped region can fail to take advantage of the existence of a giant enterprise.

However, new townships are springing up all the way from Raipur to Durg. It is possible for the economy of the region to be integrated with Bhilai. But this is yet in the future.

The State Government is recognised by the people

as universally inefficient. All that it has done so far is to establish an industrial estate at Durg for small-scale industry development, mainly to cater to the needs of the Bhilai Plant. But so far there is little to be seen of concrete work. In the meantime, it is said that these small-scale units have fallen into the hands of outsiders.

All these give rise to a number of conclusions and questions. First of all it shows that the talk of regional imbalance is a futile exercise without a real understanding of the problems of each region, and the Centre-State confrontation on economic issues is a mere tilting at the windmill.

The existence of any number of public projects in a State need not produce appreciable changes to the local economy, if the local people lack education, experience, enterprise and resources. Of course, an efficient State administration can remedy these by an effective regional plan.

Bhilai shows that the objective of self-sufficiency can sometimes be overdone. It also shows that it is time to give greater emphasis to regional planning.

One of the objectives of planning was to reduce the natural disparities between one region and another. This was recognised by the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956.

But, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar, with very large natural resources, are among the most backward areas of the country, while Punjab with very little natural resources tops the list in per capita income.

Labour Mobility

Decentralisation of the industries was suggested as a remedy by the planners. This has its limitations, for basic industries must be situated near their raw materials. However, decentralisation itself is not a remedy to regional backwardness.

Having said these, one must state certain positive aspects. The central projects should be the vehicles to increase labour mobility in the country. Regionalism has been found to be too dangerous. Bhilai is a "little India" with a mixed work force. There is little conflict based on religion, language, region, caste, etc.

These mixed communities are models of a united India. They are above the narrower appeals of the politician. They spread a wider pattern of culture in the country. In short they are the vehicles of national integration.

The problem here is how to balance the requirements of regional development with the larger needs of national integration and unity. These are problems that our planners should ponder over.

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Soviet Aid and its Impact

G. N. GANDHI

ASSOCIATION of the Soviet Union with India's developmental programmes began with the signing of first agreement in February 1955 for the Bhilai Steel Project. Since then the Soviet Union has committed over Rs 1,000 crores (post-devaluation) worth of aid in the form of machinery, equipment, material, technical personnel and training of Indians in the Soviet Union.

The magnitude of Soviet aid, when compared to the total aid received by India from various countries in the past two decades, amounts to roughly 10 per cent. Nevertheless, when evaluated in the context of its terms, conditions, and nature and direction, it is found to be most valuable in building our national economy.

The aid, almost 99 per cent is given in the form of credit at a very low interest rate of 2.5 per cent per annum repayable in Indian currency (if desired), one year after the completion of deliveries of the respective projects, in 12 equal annual instalments. Further, though the aid is tied to the purchases generally in the Soviet Union, its repayment too is tied to the Indian currency and hence has to be spent in India. The ill effects, if any of tied aid, therefore, are mostly mitigated. Besides, political conditions are absolutely unknown with the Soviet aid.

Regarding its nature and direction, the entire Soviet aid is spread over about 40 projects covering such vital fields as Steel (Bhilai

and Bokaro). Heavy Engineering (Heavy Machine Building Plant at Ranchi and Mining Machinery Plant at Durgapur), oil exploration and production (at Cambay, Ankleswar, Rudrasagar and Lakwa), oil refining (Koyali and Barauni); power projects (13 hydel and thermal plants); and the plant manufacturing power projects (Heavy Electricals Equipment at Hardwar); besides pharmaceuticals (at Rishikesh, Hyderabad and Madras).

Valuable Products

Nearly half of these projects are already complete giving valuable production while others are at various stages of construction and completion. The completed and about to be completed projects carry among them the potentialities of providing material vitally required for the industrial growth of this country. The table on this page shows the tremendous fillip that the products from these plants will add to Indian economy.

While the figures quoted in the table show only the present capacities of the plants, most of them are capable of enhancing their potentialities. Thus, for Bhilai, only 3.2 million tonnes—its present capacity—is taken account of although the fact is that it has the potentiality of additional two million tonnes of products, and even more if provided with further funds. Similarly, Bokaro is 1.7 million tonnes present capacity is to be increased by another 2.3 million tonnes in the second stage, bringing it to a total of four million tonnes with further scope of expansion to 5.5 million tonnes under the third stage, and possibly more in the subsequent stages.

Likewise the potentialities of the Heavy Machine Building Plant at Ranchi, new targetted to manufacture vital steel and oil machinery of 80,000 tonnes annually, is capable of expansion to 1,65,000 tonnes, and so is the case with other projects which, when provided with more funds for expansion, are capable of increasing their capacities.

Enormous Impact

The aided projects have made an enormous impact upon the Indian economy by influencing its nature and the direction of planning and programmes. The centuries old agriculture dominated economy has been transformed in less than two decades into a semi-industrialized economy of the western concept.

GROSS ANNUAL CAPACITIES CREATED

<i>Industries</i>	<i>Capacities</i>
Steel	4.9 million tonnes
Steel casting and forging	50,000 tonnes
Heavy equipment (metallurgical, mining, oil, and others)	10,000 tonnes
Oil refining	6 million tonnes
Coal	9.2 million tonnes
Iron ore	6.5 million tonnes
Oil exploration	6.5 million tonnes
Electric power (Hydel and Thermal)	3 million kw
Electric power equipment	3.7 million kw.
Antibiotics	290 tonnes
Synthetic drugs (finished products)	850 tonnes
Synthetic drugs (chemicals)	4,500 tonnes
Surgical instruments	2.5 million pieces
Precision and pneumatic instruments	Worth Rs 20 crores
Aluminium Products	One lakh tonnes

¹ The author, a former lecturer in Economics at Banaras Hindu University, is an officer in the Bharat Heavy Electricals, engaged in his private capacity in Research work for his Ph.D. degree on "Soviet Aid to India."

This will be seen from the fact that whereas India was begging for steel plants in the early fifties, today we are almost self-sufficient—from designing to fabrication of a steel plant. The Central Design Organisation of the Hindustan Steel is not only entrusted with the designing of the sixth blast furnace of the Bhilai steel plant and bulk of the equipment for Bokaro, but also is now designing steel mill for Singapore. The Heavy Machine Building Plant at Ranchi is now capable of outfitting a million tonne steel plant mostly with indigenous know-how and equipment.

In the field of oil, too, where we did not have one geologist at the time of Independence, leave alone any equipment like the rigs, today we have a large cadre of oilmen, steelmen and others to meet the country's requirements. We have today over 60 rigs, mostly supplied by the Soviets, and have developed the capacity to manufacture the same in the Ranchi complex as to meet our future requirements.

Power plants and the plant manufacturing machinery for the power plants HEPP, (Hardwar) is to free us permanently from dependence on outside aid for electrical equipments which would have been inevitably imparted in the absence of such capacities now being created in the country.

Direct Savings

Since all the products shown above are a must for a developing economy like ours, to ensure rapid economic growth, their availability within the country is a direct saving of foreign exchange to the extent they would have cost had we gone for them in the foreign markets. We are even today short of steel and certainly would have required much more in the absence of the indigenous products. Today it is a matter of the greatest satisfaction that instead of importing we are able to export some products like the steel from the Bhilai plant.

We are also still importing enormous quantities of crude oil

which for every million tonne cost us Rs 10 crores. One can say that the oil produced by the Oil and Natural Gas Commission mainly with the Soviet help again is a direct saving, and such more will be saved in the years to come when the ONGC further expands its activities. The Commission already has planned to produce 14.5 million tonnes by the end of 1979.

Plants like the Heavy Machine Building at Ranchi, Heavy Electricals at Hardwar, Instruments at Kota and Palghat, are now busy exploring markets abroad and the possibility is not remote of their securing foreign orders. The very idea of selling industrial goods in the sophisticated world markets makes one proud of these plants.

Unutilised Capacity

A programme large in concept, larger still in operation and magnitude, obviously cannot have one-sided impact. Likewise, the Soviet aid also has the other side, too, which has emerged mostly as a result of factors over which, to some extent, no one has control. To begin with, most of these plants are now running with surplus capacity ranging from 30 per cent to 70 per cent, and the allegation is that this is due to the over-size of the plants. An unprejudicial assessment, however, reveals that this surplus capacity is mostly due to lack of orders as a result of paucity of resources in the past few years.

Thus, for example, as against the programme of adding two million tonnes steel capacity every year as envisaged in the fifties by our planners, the actual addition has not been of even half a million tonne per annum. Obviously the capacities created at the Ranchi of Heavy Machine Building Plant cannot be utilized to its optimum capacity.

In the absence of steel and power plants, the allocations to which have been cut due to paucity of resources even in the revised Fourth Plan, the capacities in the Heavy Electricals Equipment Plant at Hardwar and the Kota and Palghat Instrument plants are held up for want of

utilization, so much so that the Palghat plant has now been shelved till the end of the Fourth Plan and the running of HEPP (Hardwar) is reduced to half of its created capacity.

The unutilized large surplus capacities in most of the plants has given rise to several other evils such as higher cost and wastage. The higher cost is due to the overhead cost of capital (both fixed and running) affecting, thus, per unit cost of the plant which in many a cases has been substantially higher than envisaged in the Detailed Project Reports.

Manned mostly by local labour indifferently trained, the quality of work is naturally poor and not up to the standard required for such sophisticated products. Besides, lack of practice, as a result of lack of orders, make them idle for days together, forgetting even little of the training and practice they might have acquired initially. Moreover, the management is helpless in removing undesirable elements, the environment created are such that no one works, if he possibly can avoid, and this results in lower output per worker, adding further to the cost per unit.

What is at stake is not only the goodwill generated as a result of the assistance offered by the Soviet Union and India's capacity to run these enterprises well (already being questioned due to poor results of the Public Sector plants), but also the future shape of the economy. We have built these plants as part of our long-term strategy to make India industrially strong and self-reliant. Succeed, therefore, we must.

KINDLY NOTE

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Assertion of Nationalism

DEWAN BERINDRANATH

RESUMPTION of political activity in Pakistan appears to have suffered under an ill-omen. Right from the very first day when taking out of processions and holding public meetings were allowed, industrial and linguistic unrest assumed serious proportions.

In both the wings of the country, not a single day has passed since then without a major trouble in some city or the other. The most notable among the incidents have been the clashes between the pro-Peking Bhashani group and the Jamaat-e-Islami in East Pakistan, industrial unrest in several towns of West Pakistan, and the rioting between the Sindhis and non-Sindhis in Hyderabad-Sind.

Refugee Concentration

The latest of the incidents, the trouble between the Sindhis and the non-Sindhis, is perhaps the most serious of them all. It is for the first time that such serious clashes have occurred between the refugees and the local people in West Pakistan. To some extent, they resembled the riots in East Pakistan in November last year.

There has been a large concentration of refugees from Delhi and Uttar Pradesh in Karachi and Hyderabad. While in Karachi, the refugees are in a majority and can hold their own against the local people, in Hyderabad-Sind, local nationalism is becoming increasingly vocal and strong.

Only last year, there were riots in the University campus over the issue whether Raja Dahar, a Sindhi Hindu ruler who

had resisted the first Muslim invasion led by Mohammed Bin Qasim, was a national hero or not. A group of Sindhi students all of them Muslims, had organised a function to commemorate the rule of Raja Dahar, who was described as a great patriot.

The well-known Sindhi leader, G M Syed, who had also headed the first Muslim League Ministry in Sind in the pre-partition days, had propounded the theory that since Islam considered the defence of motherland to be a great virtue, Raja Dahar, even though he resisted a Muslim invasion, should be considered a patriot and a hero.

It may be recalled that G M. Syed was subsequently prosecuted for publishing these views in his Sindhi book *Gems of History*. He was interned in his home town, and the restrictions on his movements was withdrawn only after the overthrow of the Ayub regime.

Sindhi Nationalism

As opposed to such waves of nationalism, the fanatic Jamaat-e-Islami, mainly composed of the Urdu-speaking refugees, had organised a Mohammed Bin-Qasim Day in October last year. Though the Day passed off peacefully, there was a good deal of tension since fiery speeches were made against all those who were trying to "impose a Hindu Raj on Sindh".

A great deal of objection has also been taken to the slogan of "Jai Sindh", which increasingly became popular with the Sindhi students. According to G.M. Syed, the propounder and the ideo-

logical mentor of the so-called "Jai Sindh" movement, this slogan should not be construed as anti-Pakistani and had nothing to do with the greetings of "Jai Hind". It was an expression of Sindhi nationalism which considered itself much older than either Pakistan or its socio-cultural moorings. The explanation did not, however, convince the Jamaat-e-Islami hot-heads who considered all such expressions of secular nationalism as inimical to the very idea of Pakistan. Nevertheless, the movement for the assertion of Sindhi rights became so popular that even a known opportunist like Z A Bhutto started greeting his audience with "Jai Sindh" while addressing meetings in Sindh.

Cultural Tension

This cultural tension between the Sindhis and non-Sindhis was aggravated when a few Sindhi students went on an indefinite hunger strike in November last year for the preparation of voters list in the Sind area in the Sindhi script.

The strength of this movement could be gauged from the fact that while in East Pakistan the Election Commissioner was able to refuse the demand of the Urdu-speaking refugees for the publication of voters list in Urdu also, in Sind the authorities had to concede that the list would be available in Sindhi as well.

There has also been a persistent demand by the Sindhi students that their language should be made the medium of instruction right up to the university level instead of being confined to the middle school level as is the case at present. This demand has been strongly resisted by the Urdu-speaking refugees.

The cultural and linguistic controversy has assumed the shape of political clashes due to the fact that while the Jamaat-e-Islami is mainly backed by the refugees, the local Sindhis are with groups like the People's Party of Z A. Bhutto, the National Awami Party of Wali Khan and the Sindhi United Front of G. M. Syed.

The Sindh movement appears to be so strong that even a leader like M. A. Khuro who was once considered an iron-man of Sindh and who has been the Muslim League Chief Minister of the Province several times, has decided to throw his lot with the Sindh movement.

It is also becoming obvious that with the break-up of the One-Unit system in West Pakistan by April this year, the tension between the refugees and the local inhabitants would be intensified. The Sindh nationalists would strongly press for an honourable status for the Sindh language. It is probable that Sindh would be declared the State language after the formation of the Sindh Province.

It might touch off a great deal of trouble in the city of Karachi where the Urdu-speaking refugees are in a majority.

Already, there have been a number of clashes between the local population and the refugees in Karachi itself, though their proportion has not been as serious as was the case in the Sind University, where the Vice-Chancellor himself, being a well-known Sindh scholar, had come out in favour of the demand for Sindh.

The implications of this trouble could be far-reaching. The Jamaat-e-Islami, which is known to be one of the best organised parties in the whole of Pakistan and is alleged to be heavily financed by Western powers, especially America, has declared that it will "continue to fight against un-Islamic elements to the end".

Its Chief, Maulana Maudoodi, has gone to the extent of saying that if need be, "Pakistan could face a bloody civil war of the

type which was fought in Indonesia in 1965-66, in which over a million Godless Communists were killed".

Bhutto has retaliated by saying that "those who want to turn Pakistan into an Indonesia should remember that we are capable of making Pakistan into another Vietnam". Such slogan shouting indicates that tempers are running high at the moment.

It is also noteworthy that the offensive and initiative for the riots in Hyderabad were taken not by the Sindh students who were in a majority, but by the Urdu-speaking followers of the Jamaat-e-Islami. This indicates that extremist Right-wing elements might be working according to a set plan, the aim of which could well be to disrupt any chances of general elections in Pakistan.

PLAN APPROACH NEEDS CHANGE (Continued from page 9)

the position of the private sector with resources provided from public funds, to say the least, is illogical.

Measures to overcome the shortcomings of the public sector, a realistic planning of production and distribution of its products, creation of an efficient managerial cadre, are among the urgent steps that the Planning Commission and the Government should initiate and implement.

Moreover, surplus revenue is not the only criterion to judge the utility of the public sector. It performs an enormous task in terms of supplying certain indispensable goods and services at reasonable prices, which would just not be available from the private sector and would have to be imported otherwise.

Again, absence of the public sector as a dominant partner in the economy will only encourage dangerous concentration of economic power in private hands.

Anti-public-sector elements do often cite the losses suffered by the Hindustan Steel Ltd to run down its role, or the unutilised capacity at the heavy engineering

complex at Ranchi. These are undoubtedly serious problems, but they are not beyond solution, and must be overcome in the national interest.

On the other hand, these critics often forget the exports of steel and products effected by the HSL. In fact, public sector exports in 1967-68 more than doubled at Rs 48 crores compared to Rs 20 crores of foreign exchange earned in 1966-67.

While processing the new changes made in the Draft Fourth Plan, the Cabinet should also consider how to reorient its bias in favour of the public sector, in keeping with the Government's declared objectives. It would enable the National Development Council, when it sits down to finalise the Plan, to give it the direction necessary to make it an instrument of achieving the social goals set before the nation.

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INDIA AND NON-ALIGNMENT

(Continued from page 11)

Does India have any such advantage flowing from the proposed non-aligned summit, or would her participation in it affect adversely her interests, bilaterally or otherwise? One should seek a clear answer to this before deciding on the question of whether or not we should go to Dar-es-Salam.

To be able to look at this question squarely on its face, one has to free oneself of the inhibiting feeling that as the initial sponsor and promoter of non-alignment, India has no other alternative except to continue to play the same role at the proposed meeting. It is this aspect of immutability and the need to get over it that was referred to at the beginning of this article.

To the extent to which we are courageous enough to break out of the shell and look at issues as they are today in the background of how our interests, short- and long-term, will be served, to that extent we would have contributed to the clarification of our policy objectives.

It would be an over-simplification if one were to say that our participation in the non-aligned summit should aim at keeping Pakistan out of this group. Of course, Pakistan occupies a very central place in the pursuit of our foreign policy and Pakistan's membership of the military alliances and the advantages she derives therefrom, constitute an aspect which our policy has always to take note of.

In that sense, any step we take which would delink Pakistan effectively from the military pacts and deny to it the supply of military equipment far in excess of its legitimate requirements, will become a valid objective of our policy. One need not think in terms of isolating Pakistan. Nor has one to be obsessed with Pakistan all the time. That need not be our policy objective, but it is in our interest to ensure that Pakistan does not continue to pose a threat.

Will our participation in Dar-es-Salam meet with the prospects of Pakistan's entry being mooted

serve this objective? Will Pakistan's membership or admission into the non-aligned group make her less abrasive towards India, or would she seek to utilise this forum also to intensify her anti-India campaign? If our experience at the defunct Afro-Asian Conference is to serve us any guide, there is no doubt as to what Pakistan would do once she takes her seat in the non-aligned group.

Would we then be well-advised to keep off the non-aligned group and let Pakistan use the platform as is her wont? That would be equally self-defeating.

There is a third alternative that is to canvass opinion amongst the members of this group against Pakistan's admission. The immediate reaction of the members of this group to any such move would be to deplore the Indian attempt to inject her opposition to Pakistan into the functioning of this multilateral group.

The world is apt to be weary about Indo-Pakistan rivalry. One cannot rule out that many a

country would prefer to keep out of such entanglements. The net result would be that we are not likely to go very far in our attempt to canvass opinion against Pakistan.

With all these three alternatives having their own deficiencies, how shall India approach this question? India has to be clear in its mind—

(a) That the concept of non-alignment continues to be valid in her foreign relations,

(b) That non-alignment will continue to guide her foreign policy,

(c) That her pursuit of such a policy need not necessarily involve her presence at non-aligned group meetings, if such participation would affect her bilateral interests,

(d) That in formulating the pattern of her international relationship, she would not hesitate to reverse the trend which had so far given enhanced importance to multilateral obligations, and, lastly,

(e) That when there is a conflict between multilateralism and bilateralism, India would unhesitatingly plump for preserving her bilateral relations.

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servant can remain neutral here

And perhaps Sri Chagla knows that the planning machinery of the state in this country has no constitutional sanction and that those who are engaged in economic activities are not strictly governed by civil service regulations

But it must also be admitted that large numbers of government servants are not committed to these national goals and some even try to sabotage them. It is difficult to be impartial in these matters. Here we are not talking of clerks and messengers, but of the higher echelons of the Government servants. They should not only be efficient and dedicated men, but must have a social conscience sympathetic to our goals.

Obviously such men, in the present context, cannot be drawn

on a party basis, but must be spotted within the existing machinery

It is being said that the civil servant need only be sufficient and effective in the conduct of prescribed policies and that this is enough commitment. This is not enough.

And here I will give a concrete instance to illustrate the difference between a committed and efficient civil servant. When the bank nationalisation ordinance was issued, there was a rumour that there would be a run on the banks. In fact, this was spread by interested parties. But a few officers of the Government got wind of it and scotched the mischief by promptly broadcasting that the depositors' money was absolutely safe. This is commitment.

A civil servant who was hostile to the Government's policies

would have welcomed the chaos. An indifferent one would have remained indifferent. I hope Sri Chagla can appreciate this difference.

These are the factors which led to the demand for the creation of a new cadre of people to man the economic activities of the state. Unfortunately, this has not yet been accepted.

Now that the defenders of democracy have decided to spread false alarms, it is time the Government gave some serious thought to this subject. In any case, it is admitted that the present civil service cannot deliver the goods.

My prescription for what it is worth: let the conservatives remain neutral or impartial in administrative jobs, and let the economic activities of the state go increasingly to the young, dynamic and progressive

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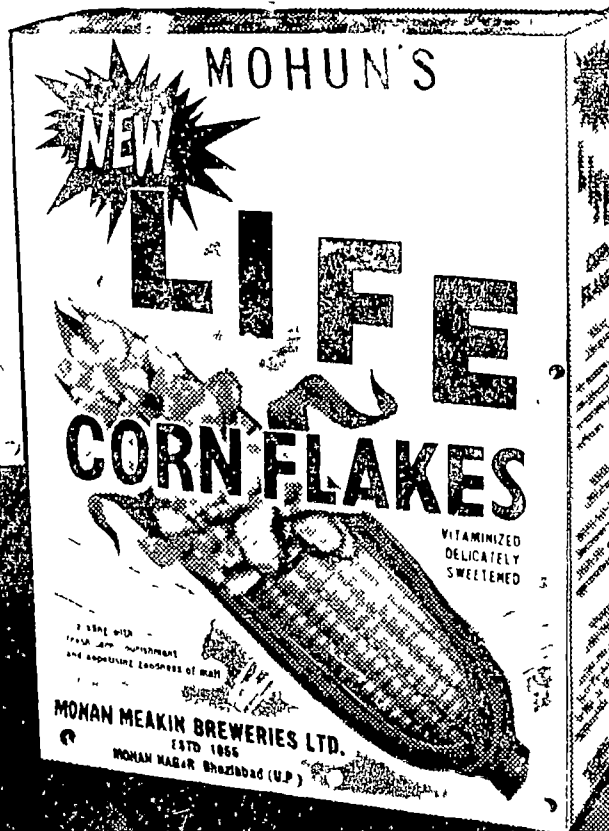
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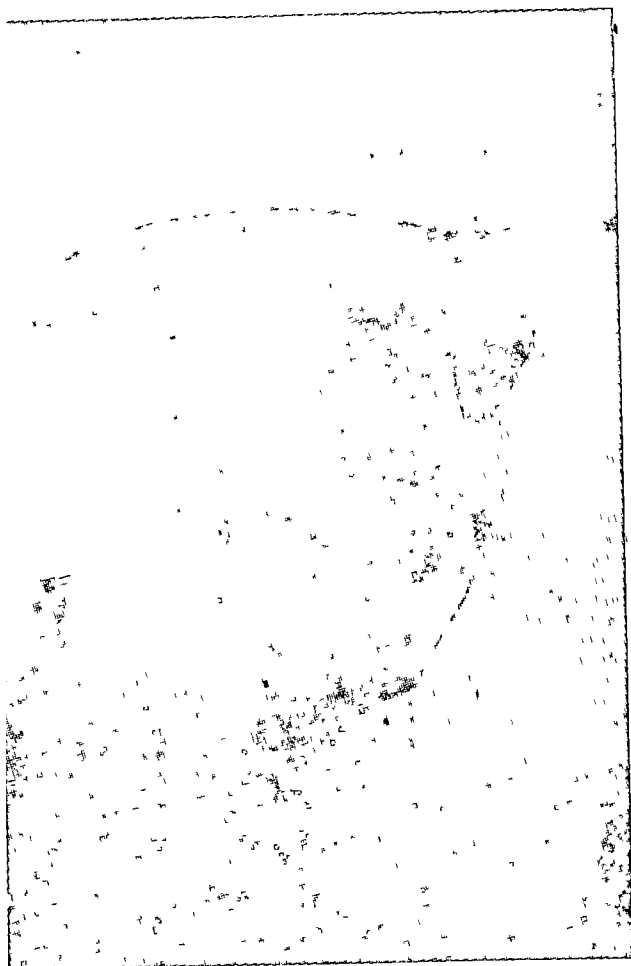
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Supreme Court and Constitution

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Supreme Court and Constitution

THE fourteen nationalised banks will have to be handed back to the private sector. That, in effect, is the majority judgment of the Supreme Court. If they are again to form part of the nationalised sector, compensation, substantially much more than what has been provided for in the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1969, has to be paid. Whether the national exchequer can afford it or not, the payment has to be practically immediate, or, if bonds are issued, they should carry such a rate of interest as can ensure that the value of the bonds is not depreciated in the market. According to the Court, this is what the Constitution requires, notwithstanding an amendment in 1956 to Article 31 of the Constitution by which adequacy of compensation was made non-judicial.

Compensation on this basis is payable in respect of all future acquisitions of property for public purposes undertaken by the state and fortunately only land reforms are exempted from this rule. Besides, the decision of the Supreme Court also raises the question whether economic inequalities can be removed by a gradual process of acquisition of the more important sectors of private industry, or whether such action would be charged as "discriminatory".

Legal pandits may quibble as to whether the court was right in practically reversing its earlier decision, or whether the relevant provisions of the Constitution should bear a different connotation. But to the people of this country, the decision of the Supreme Court raises a very fundamental issue: Were the provisions of the Constitution, particularly those relating to fundamental rights, so framed as to enable this country to march towards socialism, or did they enshrine those values on right to property and right to carry on trade and business which is fundamental to the Western capitalist constitutions? After all, the persons mainly responsible for framing the Constitution were such conservatives as Sir Alladi Krishnaswamy Iyer and Dr B R. Ambedkar. They had no faith in socialism and they never purported to frame a socialist Constitution. The entire scheme of fundamental rights relating to property formulated by them was based upon the Western capitalist constitutions and a court interpreting them is bound to look at them only in the manner in which they have been understood in the West.

That is precisely what has happened. Judges trained in the same school of thought have, therefore, been unable to look at them in any different way, even though the Constitution has been amended by Parliament to make adequacy of compensation non-judicial.

It is, therefore, clear that unless our Constitution is reshaped and socialism made the very foundation of its entire scheme, the achievement of socialism is an impossible dream. Such an amendment is possible not by an attempt at piecemeal alteration of this or that provision of the Constitution, for the judgment of Supreme Court, in Golak Nath's case, in effect, makes it impossible to modify the provisions of the Constitution in the Fundamental Rights Chapter, which guarantee property rights to the vested interests.

It is only by the convocation of a Constituent Assembly by parliamentary legislation under entry 97 of the 1st Schedule that the problem of reframing the Constitution can be effectively tackled. If the decisions taken by such a Constituent Assembly are sought to be thwarted by vested interests, the new

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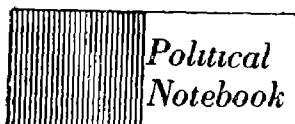
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Views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and not necessarily of this journal

Constitution may have to be adopted by the people through revolutionary means. There is and there can be no other alternative. It is suggested in some quarters that property rights enshrined in the Fundamental Rights Chapter can be taken out by amend-

ment, but the Court, as at present constituted, following its decision in Golak Nath's case, is bound to invalidate any law passed by Parliament in this behalf. It is better to face reality than making an exercise in futility.



Political Notebook

PSP: Search for Identity

CONFRONTED with the inevitable alternatives before any political organisation in the country today, the Praja Socialist Party has also made its choice after the Congressmen did at Ahmedabad and Bombay, the Jana Sangh at Patna and the Samyukta Socialist Party at Sonapur.

The PSP at its recently ended Baroda conference has chosen to seek a place in the main stream of political life. If the leaders of the PSP describe the conclusions of the Baroda session as a historic milestone, it is because in these they find a way to avoid being reduced to a peripheral entity, if not something worse.

The choice was difficult, not only because the perspectives were not clear, but also because of nearly two decades of inertia when the party subsisted on the absence of clearly defined options in the country's political life. The dominant leadership determinedly fought for its tactical line in the teeth of relentless opposition from a section of the leadership only because the choice has still not been fully spelt out.

Efforts made to avoid a split by accepting an amendment to the main resolution, although not contradictory to its line, is symptomatic of the realisation that a cool calculation at this juncture would pay better dividends than a "hasty" decision. The decision to "open a dialogue" with Indira Congress does not tie its hands, but an open declaration of alignment with the Syndicate, Jana

Sangh and the Swatantra Party, wipes out its claim to be an authentic representative of social democracy vis-a-vis the SSP.

At Baroda, the claim was paraded with uninhibited abandon, though differences on tactics was clearly visible. For the group led by Sri H. V. Kamath and Sri Samar Guha, MP from West Bengal, the path to establish social democracy in India lay via Ahmedabad and Patna, and with greater significance, Sonapur. The majority, however, saw this path as a death-trap and had no difficulty in overwhelmingly endorsing the dominant leadership's stand on the question of opening "a meaningful dialogue with Congress(R)", and foiling the dissidents' effort to incorporate the words "and the Congress (O)" along with it.

Seven of the party stalwarts from the 22-member national executive, namely, Kamath, Guha, Hem Barua, Murli Dhar Vyas, Harbhajan Singh, Peter Alvares and Balwant Singh, agreed with every word of the official resolution except "Congress (R)", to them, this expression did not fit in with the total framework of the resolution and actually distorted its main objective.

However, having distributed the "saints and sinners" equally between the Indira Congress and the Syndicate, Kamath and his

friends found themselves in a quandary, their argument to include "Congress(O)" alongside "Congress(R)" for a "meaningful dialogue", lost its "logic".

In a devious move, they questioned the preference shown to the Indira Congress and clamoured for "equal treatment" for both. It was only Kamath among them who showed exceptional daring to explicitly emphasise his preference. His memory of the Vice-Presidential election, in which most of the votes he could gather came from the Syndicate, was not that short-lived.

In the process, all attempts of the supporters of the official resolution to draw attention of the delegates to pressing economic issues on which the party needed to take a stand, and build its following by working among the masses, proved futile. Major part of the conference proceedings was taken by the unrewarding efforts to reconcile the two irreconcilable viewpoints, until at last Sri S. N. Dwivedy mounted a massive attack on the dissidents with a take it or vote it down posture.

For four days preceding the conference, the national executive had itself gone through the same gruelling experience, only to harden the respective standpoints. The main resolution was adopted in the executive by a majority, kindling a hope among the dissidents that it could be watered down in the delegates' session.



Divergences had also appeared over the Party's attitude to a telegraphic message from Congress President Jagjivan Ram calling for cooperation in the fight against rightist alliances. Moreover, the executive had already taken a decision to support an anti-Syndicate Ministry in Bihar before the conference had started its discussion on the main resolution.

The two sides came to the conference well prepared for a confrontation. Even before the second day's session began a discussion on the political line, Kamath had let it be known that if the executive's resolution was adopted without modification, the party would face a split.

And the confrontation continued for full two days, despite the efforts of the dominant leadership to avert a crisis after the first day's discussions. It moved a "unanimously" accepted amendment on behalf of the national executive.

Kamath led the dissident's attack in the name of *sahi samajwad* (true socialism). In an attempt to establish his bona fides before the delegates, he

announced his resignation from the membership of the national executive and the chairmanship of the Party's parliamentary board, even though the executive had already given him permission to oppose the resolution in the open session.

He commandeered all his histrionic capabilities and humoured the delegates, punning on the name of the Indira Congress—Cong-ru for the "Ruling Congress" as against "Cong-o" for the Syndicate. This helped him perorate for full seventy minutes, regaling the delegates with all sorts of inanities.

Kamath's amendment sought to replace "taking into consideration mass urges, the urgency to create a social order modern in its outlook, behaviour and ethos, the PSP is willing to enter into a meaningful dialogue with the Congress(R)." as in the official resolution, with "taking into consideration the present situation and the urgency to create a congenial climate for social transformation, the PSP is willing to enter into a meaningful dialogue with parties which profess faith in nationalism, secular-

ism, democracy and socialism"

The national executive, on the other hand, proposed a "unanimously accepted" amendment adding after "Congress(R)" the words "and other parties which unequivocally stand by nationalism, secularism, democracy and socialism", thus taking the wind out of the sails of Kamath's vituperative arguments.

Kamath claimed that the crux of the resolution was that Smt Indira Gandhi was a Socialist. When asked to prove it from the body of the resolution, Kamath fell back on a subterfuge—if it was not so, why this dialogue with her? Echoing Acharya Kripalani, he said Smt Gandhi was "a little more modest than Hitler".

According to him, the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra were lesser evils than the Communists, Akalis, Muslim League and the DMK, and likewise, the Cong(O) less dangerous than the Congress(R). His unbridled anti-Communism and pro-Jana-Sangh stance were, however, unceremoniously cut short when he started reading out a long thesis on Smt Gandhi's biography.

Peeved, he pointed out that other speakers had been allowed to attack Morarji Desai and Asoka Mehta.

His masterpiece was that even if the Cong(O) had committed a sin by aligning with the right reactionary parties, it had atoned for it by also joining hands with "our brother Socialists, the SSP". He regretted that just when the long-cherished dream of Socialist unity was near fulfilment, the resolution virtually threw the party into the lap of the ruling Congress "Telegrams can be easily manoeuvred," he alleged

Guha gave a loyal support to Kamath's stand, punctuating his speech with anecdotes and metaphors, and regaled the delegates with his gestures and mannerism. He was followed by dissidents from Punjab, Bengal and Uttar Pradesh

A somewhat different position was taken by Orissa delegate Vishwanath Pandit. While he thought the correct political resolution had faltered in the concluding portions, he strongly criticised Kamath for having hastily led the party out of the SSP at Varanasi in 1965, and now trying to force it headlong into the SSP again.

It was at this stage that the dominant leadership in the executive made a "compromise" move, accepting an amendment by Punjab's Harbhajan Singh and presented it to the delegates as a "unanimously accepted" amendment

However, the dissident supporters quickly realised that their leaders had been out-manoeuvred, while Kamath, Guha and others vainly interpreted the amendment as opening the way for negotiations with the Syndicate as well

Only after the dominant leadership realised that Sri Nath Pai's contribution in the debate had been more defensive than giving it back to the dissidents, that Dwivedy himself appeared on the stage to deliver a frontal attack.

Dwivedy acquainted the delegates with some telling home truths. What was the strength of the PSP and its ability to influence the country's politics? Going it alone,

he said, was practised over the years and the so-called "true socialism" would only further incapacitate the party. He advised the delegates to recognise the objective reality of the Congress split

He was firmly of the view that, past policies notwithstanding, the party could at no cost align with the rightist and reactionary forces. "No Socialist could attain the goal of socialism by aligning with the revivalists"

His final point was that the official resolution could be voted down by the delegates if the majority disagreed with it, but there was no scope for an understanding with the Syndicate so long as it was aligned with the Jana Sangh "You cannot align with those parading as nationalists although they may be killing the Muslims elsewhere."

Dwivedy also made it clear that "dialogue" did not mean withholding of the party's struggle against the reactionaries inside the Indira Congress, nor the absence of any mention of the SSP and the ISP in the official resolution was any bar to unity with them.

As regards the PSP attitude towards the Communists, Dwivedy drew attention of the delegates to the difficulties these parties were experiencing both in Kerala and West Bengal. He was for educating the party members and the people that Communism could not be represented by both the CPIs, but only one of them. He ridiculed those who shouted day in and day out that Smt Gandhi was in league with the Communists. This way, he thought, they actually threw her into the Communist lap

For Dwivedy and the dominant leadership in the PSP, this was the "best ever available opportunity" for the Socialists, and the official resolution offered them a "politically astute" policy which the Socialists could profitably follow under the given circumstances

But in the midst of this battle royal, the Baroda session virtually forgot all about its economic programme or the "programme of action". The majority of the dissident leaders and their

followers from different States had left Baroda by the time the programme of action and mass struggles was taken up for discussion

According to the PSP Chairman, Sri N.G. Goray, this was the "soul" of the conference, which came before the delegates towards the far end of the last day. At the time when discussions came to the point on "mobilising the millions of masses" for democratic socialism, a few hundred observers had also left the conference venue

It was in this half-empty pandal that the decision was adopted to make it incumbent upon the leaders to lead the mass struggles launched under the party's auspices in different parts of the country.

While it is true that the dominant leadership in the PSP managed to carry the day, its headaches are not yet over. Samar Guha told press correspondents at Baroda itself that if Dwivedy's interpretation was accepted by the party, persons like him had no place in it. He claimed he was not alone.

OUT of all this the bare fact that emerges is that the PSP today stands at the crossroads of history. As has the Sonapur conference of the SSP shown, so has Baroda, that social democracy is engaged in a search for new opportunities to exist and expand its following, without coming face to face with reality.

There is pressure from the PSP supporters that being with the masses and leading them, showed the way to survival, without realising that the prevailing popular consciousness had outstripped the extent their leaders were prepared to go.

The PSP leadership did talk of a meaningful dialogue with the ruling Congress, but it had no time to spare a thought for forging a broad unity of all progressive democratic forces which alone could secure the confidence of the masses, and lead them in their coming struggles.

Observer

February 9

MAINSTREAM

Bertrand Russell

In the passing away of Bertrand Russell, the world has lost the noblest non-conformist who dared to doubt everything. The supreme individualist, he was the Great Dissident challenging all traditional values. No greater tribute can be paid to his memory than remembering some of his abiding thoughts.

MEN fear thought as they fear nothing else on earth—more than ruin, more even than death. Thought is subversive and revolutionary, destructive and terrible, thought is merciless to privilege, established institutions, and comfortable habits; thought is anarchic and lawless, indifferent to authority, careless of the well-tryed wisdom of the ages. Thought looks into the pit of hell and is not afraid. It sees man, a feeble speck, surrounded by unfathomable depths of silence, yet it bears itself proudly, as unmoved as if it were lord of the universe. Thought is great and swift and free, the light of the world, and the chief glory of man.

LOVE, beauty, knowledge, and joy of life, these things retain their lustre however wide our purview. And if philosophy can help us to feel the value of these things, it will have played its part in man's collective work of bringing light into a world of darkness.

THREE passions, simple but overwhelmingly strong, have governed my life: the longing for love, the search for knowledge, and unbearable pity for the suffering of mankind. These passions, like great winds, have blown me hither and thither, in a wayward course, over a deep ocean of anguish, reaching to the very verge of despair.

I have sought love, first, because it brings ecstasy—ecstasy so great that I would often have sacrificed all the rest of life for a few hours of this joy. I have sought it, next, because it relieves loneliness—that terrible loneliness in which one shivering consciousness looks over the rim of the world into the cold unfathomable lifeless abyss. I have sought it, finally, because in the union of love I have seen, in a mystic miniature, the prefiguring vision of the heaven that saints and poets have imagined. This is what I sought, and thought it might seem too good for human life, this is what—at last—I have found.

With equal passion I have sought knowledge. I have wished to understand the hearts of men. I have wished to know why the stars shine. And I have tried to apprehend the Pythagorean power by which number holds sway above the flux. A little of this, but not much, I have achieved.

Love and knowledge, so far as they were

possible, led upward toward the heavens. But always pity brought me back to earth. Echoes of cries of pain reverberate in my heart. Children in famine, victims tortured by oppressors, helpless old people a hated burden to their sons, and the whole world of loneliness, poverty, and pain make a mockery of what human life should be. I long to alleviate the evil, but I cannot, and I too suffer.

This has been my life. I have found it worth living and would gladly live it again if the chance were offered me.

TO be the recipient of affection is a potent cause of happiness, but the man who demands affection is not the man upon whom it is bestowed. The man who receives affection is, speaking broadly, the man who gives it.

AND often I feel that religion, like the sun, has extinguished the stars of less brilliancy but not less beauty, which shine upon us out of the darkness of a godless universe. The splendour of human life, I feel sure, is greater to those who are not dazzled by the divine radiance, and human comradeship seems to grow more intimate and more tender from the sense that we are all exiles on an inhospitable shore.

BRIEF and powerless is Man's life; on him and all his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way, for Man, condemned today to lose his dearest, tomorrow himself to pass through the gate of darkness, it remains only to cherish, ere yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day; disdaining the coward terrors of the slave of Fate, to worship at the shrine that his own hands have built; undismayed by the empire of chance, to preserve a mind free from the wanton tyranny that rules his outward life; proudly defiant of the irresistible forces that tolerate, for a moment, his knowledge and his condemnation, to sustain alone, a weary but unyielding Atlas, the world that his own ideals have fashioned despite the trampling march of unconscious power.

Jai Hind for a Nazi

His number in the Nazi party was 5518139. His assignment was in the secret Nazi radio "Concordia" as a top propagandist. The then Nazi Foreign Office had a "character certificate" which said his "standing as a National Socialist can be certified without any doubt".

Kiesinger, former West German Chancellor, who worked under him in the radio as his assistant, had appointed him the official spokesman of his CDU-SPD coalition Government.

This "illustrious" gentleman is Herr Gunther Diehl, Ambassador-designate of West Germany to New Delhi. He will replace Herr Baron von Mirbach, himself another former Nazi and with a reputation of having once been known as the "Jews-Baby-Killer".

First-hand Knowledge

Herr Diehl has a first-hand knowledge of Indians, if not of India. He and Kiesinger used to censor and even surreptitiously delete portions from the broadcasts of none other than Subhas Chandra Bose in those fateful days of the Second World War.

Some of the former INA men tell me that Herr Diehl was very much involved in the murder of a group of INA soldiers who had volunteered to fight against the common enemy, Britain, but had refused to join the Nazi troops on Germany's eastern frontier.

As far as I know, under the international diplomatic practice, while it is open to any government to designate any one it thinks fit as its ambassador to a country, it is equally open to a country to accept the person

selected, or reject the proposal outright. No person can be imposed as ambassador on another country without its express approval.

I am not quite sure if our Foreign Office had cared to remember this very important aspect of normal diplomatic practice. Otherwise Herr Diehl's designation as Ambassador to this country could not have been accepted, when soon after the entire nation was to pay glowing tributes to the valiant INA fighters and their leader Subhas Chandra Bose on January 23 this year.

I wonder if anybody in the South Block had looked up some of the easily available, internationally known documents on former Nazis and their role in the Hitler regime, and managed to miss this particular reference. But those who did not find anything wrong in accepting and welcoming Baron D von Mirbach, were certainly not the ones to raise an alarm over Herr Gunther Diehl.

It would be interesting to know if the Foreign Office would now prepare a brief, among others, on Herr Diehl's antecedents for the talks that Sri Dinesh Singh is scheduled to hold with Herr Walter Scheel when the West German Foreign Minister halts here for three days in course of his well-advertised peripatations in South-east Asia.

But more interesting, perhaps, would be to know Herr Scheel's reactions if any objection to this appointment was raised by us. Herr Scheel himself was a full Lieutenant in Hitler's Luftwaffe. Scheel and Diehl—how well they rhyme!

HAS Bhanu Prakash Singh, the former ruler of Narsinghgarh and presently Union Deputy Minister for Industrial Development, been already given the order of the boot? His current behaviour like a punished child smarting after a severe caning by the teacher, makes one feel that something has definitely gone wrong somewhere.

Reporting Bhanu's recent press conference at Bhopal against the abolition of the privy purses, the *Times of India* described him as a "flamboyant ruler" and informed its readers "When told that he was in the happy position of both 'the gamekeeper and the poacher', Mr Singh retorted that he was 'a gamekeeper all right, but shoots under authorisation'."

Whose Gamekeeper?

Of course, he did not clarify whose "gamekeeper" he had chosen to be now and under whose "authorisation" he had resorted to shooting. But that is not difficult to guess.

Busy as he is with these extramural activities, "he had not given thought to the Home Minister's view that the privy purses represented an anachronism", he told the pressmen.

Bhanu also claimed that "he had been asked to negotiate with the princes on behalf of the Central Government". Was he negotiating with himself? But, then, what was Sri Chavan doing all these days if Bhanu was entrusted with this job? And if so, was he asked to behave in the manner he had?

Privy purses are an anachronism, no doubt, but the continuation of this princeling in the Central Government is more so, particularly when he has openly declared a war against the Government's accepted policy.

One would hope that Smt. Indira Gandhi would not wait till the much talked of "reshuffle" to get rid of this agent of the princes in her Government. She did not delay action in case of others who had defied her Government's policies only a few months ago.

—Sarat Patra

February 8

The crisis in the West Bengal United Front has brought about a sharp division in the camp of the Left in this country. Mainstream starts here below a discussion on the problems facing the Left forces in the United Front with this contribution from a well-known Marxist intellectual. Other contributions will be welcome — Editor

West Bengal's United Front: the Issues

ARUN BOSE

BEFORE this is printed, or shortly afterwards, West Bengal's second United Front may have ended because it could not be mended

Some will be relieved, but for different reasons, none of which will convince others who are not

Those who think this will be the end of "party-politics" in West Bengal, forget several things: (i) serious politics, for high stakes, in Bengal (and India) as opposed to somnolent, routine politics has always been bitter "party or power politics," (ii) all attempts to abolish party-politics in India (through President's rule) and in neighbouring Pakistan (through military rule) have only strengthened party-politics (even the Editor of *The Statesman* understands this, though the Syndicate leaders probably don't).

Others, who hope serious revolutionary politics uncontaminated by the use of parliamentary (electioneering) or satyagraha techniques will become effective at last, may have to wait longer than they would like to, or be able to.

Even those who are more realistic and expect a single-party majority to emerge as an alternative in a second mid-term poll may be disappointed. (Even if there is a single-party majority again in West Bengal, the party which wins it in West Bengal may find itself entangled in some form of United-Front adjustment at the Centre with some of its opponents in West Bengal).

If this is so, it is worth trying to identify some of the key issues or problems of West Bengal's second experiment with the united front (which began when it survived the defection of Dr Prafulla Ghosh and a section of the Bangla Congress, who were eliminated from politics in the next—1969 mid-term—poll)

2

TO do this, we must first get out of the way some false or dead issues (or non-issues) which may help the political parties who harp on them to trap their opponents, but are useless to others. These are of three or four distinct kinds

First, and perhaps the most confusing, is the stress on problems which are inherently insoluble.

Typical of this is the complaint that the largest party in the United Front is trying to secure a single-party majority position, or that the smaller parties are trying to become big. To such complaints there is no redress, since no political party is in politics mainly to benefit other political parties. Parties of the United Front can probably grow faster (now) at each other's expense, than at the expense of the disintegrating Congress in West Bengal. (If any party of the United Front seems to be anxious to help its allies, it is either doing it because it is the best way in which, for the time being, it can grow at the expense of some of them, or because it has lost interest in politics and will soon disappear.)

Complaints that member-parties of the United Front are doing something wrong by saying they want to lead class struggles, or by taking opposite sides in some rural or urban class struggles are on the same footing. Although its agreed minimum programme says nothing about class struggles, the United Front emerged precisely because workers, peasants and employees have chosen some of its members to lead them against the Congress in their class struggles, and other members of the United Front have not opposed them. But with the (fractured) Congress inactive, trying to live down its past record, it was natural for sections of the propertied classes in town and country to enlist the support of some of the United Front parties. Since none of the major Marxist parties in the United Front believe that the United Front is against *all* propertied elements, they cannot object to this in principle, though it is their duty always to force a compromise favourable to the classes they represent. (Thus *no* Marxist party should have objected to a satyagraha against the violent methods of *all* parties involved in inter-party clashes, though all of them *should* have objected to only one of them being singled out as the object of the satyagraha campaign.)

To the same category belongs the demand that no member-party should protest in public against violation of unanimous United Front decisions to avert inter-party clashes, until it has withdrawn from the Front. No party which does not want to

sink into oblivion will attack its United Front partners only *after* it has withdrawn from the Front.

Another type of "non-issue" represented by the persistence of rumours and suspicions even after they are explicitly repudiated by those concerned. Examples are the recent rumours of a secret CPI(M) —Syndicate deal to form an alternative West Bengal Government, or the earlier suspicion of a CPI deal with the Bangla Congress and the Congress (Indira Gandhi) to form a mini-front government in West Bengal. While it may help some parties to keep these rumours alive, they should not base their policies on them.

Finally, there is the question of Central intervention, which was a key issue under West Bengal's first United Front experiment, but which is a receding issue after the Syndicate's defeat in the Presidential election and the split in the all-India Congress. In contrast to the eager, active, massive Central intervention against West Bengal's first United Front Government (the Naxalbari police action, the Prafulla Ghosh-Dharam Vira operation), Central intervention against the second United Front Government is likely to be unwilling, passive and minimal. To ignore Central intervention is to live in a fool's paradise, and no member-party of the United Front is making that mistake. But to ignore the drastic change in Central tactics is to create false issues

3

THE real issues posed by West Bengal's experiments with the United Front have been obscured by the non-issues generated by inter-party tension within the Front.

They are all connected with the fact that people's mandate to the United Front is essentially different from the mandate given to successive Congress governments in the past. The United Front is expected not only to secure the immediate economic demands of the workers, peasants and employees (with respect to wages, dearness allowances and bonuses, etc), many of which have been pending for twenty years. The United Front is expected to *begin* to introduce *minor*, but *radical* changes in the *power-structure* in the political and economic spheres.

The thesis that the State Government is a glorified municipality looked plausible enough under the first United Front Government, because the Central Government practically usurped all state powers. Its plausibility has been much reduced when the second United Front Government began its career by having its way with the Defence Ministry over the Cossipore Gun and Shell Factory incident, when it had its way over the posting of the CRP in the Asansol industrial belt, when even the police mutiny did not tempt Sri Chavan to touch the United Front government etc). Even if there is a re-emergence of a strong interventionist Centre, the West Bengal United Front Government has manipulated, successfully, too many levers of state power to support the myth that State governments can do nothing more than a municipality, even if they want to.

Most of these live issues, sharply focussed by the

achievements and failures of West Bengal's second United Front experiments are classifiable under the following "heads".

A. Political

(1) Exactly how should intervention by the police and the bureaucracy (including the Judiciary), which has been traditionally *against* workers and peasants, be reduced to a minimum?

(2) How far, and in what way, should people's volunteer organisations take over the function of maintaining public order,

(3) How far should member-parties of the United Front be permitted to criticise each other in public?

(4) Should ministerial *responsibility* be allotted party-wise, or should all portfolios be entrusted to all parties of the United Front?

(5) Should a United Front Chief Minister exercise control over portfolios other than his own as chairman of collective agencies (such as the United Front Committee, the Cabinet or the United Front's legislature party, or in his personal capacity?

B. Economic

(1) whether re-distribution of land should be encouraged. If the answer is yes, (i) whether it should be done "from above" by the officers of state, or "from below" through active initiative by the tillers themselves; (ii) if it is to be done "from below" through active initiative by the tillers themselves, (iii) if it is to be done "from below", whether land-occupation should be organised separately or jointly by member-parties of the United Front; and (iii) whether organisers of land-seizures would be responsible for rectifying errors, for instance a land-seizure which dispossesses the owner and *also* evicts tillers with good claims to the land

(2) Whether the United Front Government should sponsor collective bargaining (between workers and employers in industry and trade or between sharecroppers and their employers in agriculture) on a quid pro quo basis, with a clause assuring uninterrupted production, sales and employment by *both* employers and employees until a change in conditions permits a revision of the agreement.

(3) Whether some form of workers' control and workers' participation in management of industrial enterprises should be sponsored by the Government in the public and private sectors. If the answer is yes, (i) what should be the degree of intervention involved in sponsorship by the Labour Ministry? (ii) how should the problem of trade union rivalry be tackled?

4

IT is obvious that West Bengal's United Front has not yet found the answers to the questions just posed. But the answers will have to be found in the years ahead, for application, not only in West Bengal, but in other parts of India. And the apparently sterile and endless discussions and polemics of the last four months have narrowed some of the issues, at least by showing which solutions are

(Continued on page 36)

Judiciary and "Directives"

M.P.R. NAIR

THE Directive Principles of State Policy embodied in Part IV of the Constitution reflect the nation's hopes and aspirations for attaining socialism under a sovereign democratic republic.

The importance of this Chapter in the scheme of the Constitution is explained in Article 37 of the Constitution which says that "the provisions contained in this part shall not be enforceable by any court, but the principles therein laid down are nevertheless fundamental in the governance of the country and it shall be the duty of the state to apply these principles in making laws".

The accent is obviously on a socialist pattern of society, right to an adequate means of livelihood, removal of economic disparities, raising of living standards, promotion of educational and economic interests of the disadvantaged classes, and the creation of a healthy community and a healthy nation.

No Parallel

The concept of Directive Principles of State Policy was borrowed from the Constitution of the Irish Free State which, in turn, took it from the Constitution of Republican Spain. It has no parallel in the Constitution of any other country. The inclusion of a chapter containing the essential principles of a socialist welfare state treating them as fundamental in the governance of the country and yet unenforceable by any court of law may sound paradoxical.

A country like India having a large population with wide econo-

mically and socially backward, illiterate and poor, having had to suffer from foreign exploitation and domination over a number of years, cannot be expected to transform itself into a society in which socialism can be brought into being by giving enforceability to the "directives" in or by a court of law.

However, what is contemplated under the Constitution is a change from the present state of affairs to a society where justice—social, economic and political—will prevail, where there will be liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, equality of opportunity, and fraternity among the people assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation.

Gradual Change

It admits of no doubt that the key to the attainment of socialism lies in the initiation of welfare legislations embodying the noble ideals included in the directives. These principles are "not enforceable by any court". The words "fundamental in the governance of the country" and "it shall be the duty of the State" indicate that the Constitution-makers have intended that these principles ought as far as possible to be applied in making laws.

The mandate contained in Article 37 is to the state and "the state" is defined in Part IV to bear the same meaning as in Part III of the Constitution dealing with the fundamental rights.

It is clear that the Constitution-makers have contemplated the transmutation of the present society into one of socialistic state by a gradual change within

the democratic set-up by application of the directives in the making of laws

It would appear that the mandate is essentially to the legislative organ of the state, namely, Parliament and other State legislatures. But it will also extend to all other bodies and institutions which constitute the state within the definition contained in Article 12.

There are three major institutions, all created by the Constitution—the executive, the legislature and the judiciary. Article 12 specifically mentions the executive and the legislative organs, but there is either a deliberate or accidental omission of any reference to judiciary

Is judiciary a body included in the definition of "the state"? If the answer to this question is in the affirmative, the Directive Principles of State Policy assume greater importance and the intention of the Constitution-makers in engrafting these principles as fundamental in the governance of the country will be self-evident. Because in that event the mandate under Article 37 will go to the judiciary as well.

However, the importance of the chapter of fundamental rights has, in recent times, been over-emphasised. The existence of a charter of rights considered as inviolate and unassailable with an effective machinery provided in the Constitution under Articles 32 and 226 for the enforcement thereof, has belittled the image of Part IV.

It may not be that the directive principles of state policy are embodied in the constitution for merely recognizing the social and moral values for which the nation stands. Is it were not, these principles have to be accorded better and greater recognition by the executive, the legislature and the judiciary

The oft-heard criticism that the judiciary causes the biggest stumbling block in the way of giving effect to the legislative enactments of socialistic import by invalidating progressive measures cannot, altogether, be brushed aside. The history of the property rights under the Constitution bears sufficient testimony to the fact that the judiciary had

played not a small role in safeguarding the rights of the citizen in regard to property.

Even when it was expressly provided that the quantum of compensation is not justiciable if a law made under Article 31(2) provided for payment of compensation in cases of compulsory acquisition, the Court has held that adequacy of compensation can be tested at least on two grounds, namely, the doctrine of colourable legislation or of fraud on the Constitution.

The ingenuity and the anxiety of the court to safeguard the fundamental rights of the citizen, even in spite of the Constitution (Fourth Amendment) Act, make it clear that the judiciary has emphasised the character of fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution as sacrosanct, may be, because it is the function of the judiciary to protect the citizens whose fundamental rights have been infringed.

Significance Ignored

The famous decision in *Golak Nath's* case by which the fundamental rights have been placed beyond the reach of Parliament, is also illustrative of the point. There is nothing more that can be said against the fundamental rights unless the decision in *Golak Nath's* case is over-ruled or set at naught by Parliament by a further amendment of the Constitution.

In subserving Part IV to the fundamental rights, the courts, it is respectfully submitted, have ignored the significance of the mandate to the state contained in Article 37 of the Constitution and have been largely guided by the fact that the directives are not enforceable by any court of law.

The fact, however, remains that just as the legislature is charged with a duty to perform under this Article, the judiciary has equal responsibility to uphold a law made in pursuance of the mandate contained in Article 37.

The question, therefore, is; whether the judiciary, as one of the three organs of state administration, will also be included in

the definition of "the state" occurring in Article 12 of the Constitution.

I have mentioned it earlier that there has been a deliberate or accidental omission of the word "judiciary" in the definition of Article 12. Would the Constitution-makers have intended to exclude the institution called judiciary, from the scope of the definition in Article 12? Would the Constitution, read as a whole, convey such a sense? It is hard to believe that in a democratic Constitution like ours, the judiciary could be clothed with such an immunity.

In *Naresh V. State of Maharashtra* (AIR 1967 SC 1), the question arose, not directly though, for the consideration of the Supreme Court. A single judge of the Bombay High Court had passed an order prohibiting the publication of the oral evidence of one of the witnesses, Sri Goda, in a suit for damages instituted by Sri Krishnaraj M.D Thackersey against Sri R K Karanjia for alleged malicious libel published in the *Blitz*.

Sri Naresh, a reporter, challenged the order of the learned single judge unsuccessfully under Article 226 of the Constitution, whereupon he and certain others filed petitions under Article 32 before the Supreme Court for enforcement of their fundamental rights under Article 19(1) (a) and (g) of the Constitution.

Judicial Verdict

The question, therefore, was whether the Bombay High Court had committed a breach of the fundamental rights of the petitioners who were journalists and if so, the order of the High Court was amenable to the *certiorari* jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. The Court consisting of nine judges held by a majority that no writ under Article 32 will issue against a judicial order passed by a court.

Chief Justice Gajendragadkar who spoke for the majority, observed that "the judicial verdict pronounced by Court in or in relation to a matter brought before it for its decision cannot

be said to affect the fundamental rights of citizens under Article 19 (1)".

His Lordship recorded the conclusion of the majority in the following words: "We are, therefore, satisfied that so far as the jurisdiction of this Court to issue writs of *certiorari* is concerned, it is impossible to accept the argument of the petitioners that judicial orders passed by High Courts in or in relation to proceedings pending before them, are amenable to be corrected by exercise of the said jurisdiction. We have no doubt that it would be unreasonable to attempt to rationalise the assumption of jurisdiction by this Court under Article 32 to correct such judicial orders on the fanciful hypothesis that High Courts may pass extravagant orders in or in relation to matters pending before them and that a remedy by way of a writ of *certiorari* should, therefore, be sought for and be deemed to be included within the scope of Article 32. The words used in Article 32 are no doubt wide, but having regard to the considerations which we have set out in the course of this judgment, we are satisfied that the impugned order cannot be brought within the scope of this Court's jurisdiction to issue a writ of *certiorari* under Article 32, to hold otherwise would be repugnant to the well-recognised limitations within which the jurisdiction to issue writs of *certiorari* can be exercised and inconsistent with the uniform trend of this Court's decisions in relation to the said point".

The majority decision may be taken to mean that no writ will issue to civil courts of plenary jurisdiction in or in relation to matters brought before them. It might be so in English law, but the law of writs in India are really not obsessed by the technicalities of the law in England.

The wording in Article 32 and 226 of the Constitution is specific and admit of no doubt that the Supreme Court and the High Courts are invested with the jurisdiction to issue writs, orders or directions to any authority

(Continued on page 34)

Tinkering With Problem

SHIVA CHANDRA JHA

"AN agricultural employed worker is a person whose time not being occupied, or not wholly occupied, in cultivating land of his own, is willing to work on the land of another for some form of remuneration. The last five words mark the nature of the modern agricultural labour contract and it should be remarked that the worker is assumed to be landless on the occupation of only small parcel of land"¹

Under this definition of an agricultural labourer, four main types have been classified: (1) bonded or semi-free labourers, (2) dwarf-holding labourers, (3) underemployed landless labourers, and (4) full time free wage earners²

The problem of the agricultural labour in India, thus, has to cover those main types and it has to be looked from two points of view: first, in the macro, broad context of the Indian economy as a whole, and secondly, in the micro context of the policies and their implementation since Independence

But both, the report of the National Commission on Labour and the Union Home Ministry's study report, "The Causes and Nature of Current Agrarian Tensions", have failed to look at the agricultural labour problem in that broad context of the Indian economy as a whole

The result has been that both these reports have failed to make

a scientific diagnosis of the malaise in which is the Indian agricultural labour at present in India, and, thus, have failed to prescribe any radical cure.

In the second micro context of the policies and their implementation since Independence, specially within the last few years, both the reports do lament the deteriorating economic condition of the agricultural labourers. And they shed their tears in the stereotyped statistical data which may not be disputed

Weakest Link

Now, what is that broad context of the Indian economy as a whole which is working at present in India? It goes without saying that it is capitalism, growing capitalism, which is the Indian economy

Since Independence and under the Plans, capitalism in India has been helped to grow. And now it has reached the stage of the great contradictions of the growing private sector and the growing public sector. This is irreconcilable. In other words, Indian capitalism is doomed, it is one more "weakest link" in the chain of world capitalism.

This in a miniature is the overall shape of the Indian economy and the problem of the agricultural labourers is, thus, a problem of this situation.

Now, when capitalism grows, what does it do? It does the same thing as it has done in other countries, that is, it makes inroads in the agricultural sector. Capitalism starts penetrating and developing in the agricultural sector. And for the development of capitalism in the agricultural

sector, it needs the same thing as it needs in the industrial sector.

According to Marx "Two very different kinds of commodity-possessors must come face to face and into contact: on the one hand, the owners of money, means of production, means of subsistence, who are eager to increase the sum of the values they possess, by buying other people's labour-power, on the other hand, free labourers, the sellers of their own labour-power. With this polarization of the market for commodities, the fundamental conditions of capitalist production are given. The capitalist system pre-supposes the complete separation of the labourers from all property in the means by which they can realize their labour...The so-called primitive accumulation, therefore, is nothing else than the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production the expropriation of the agricultural producer, of the peasants, from the soil is the basis of the whole process."³

The so-called green revolution, which in fact started not in the last few years but since the launching of the First Plan, is doing that primitive accumulation, the polarization of the market, the expropriation of the agricultural producer, of the peasant, from the soil, for the development of capitalism in Indian agriculture

These two reports have failed to look at the problem of the agricultural labourers from this broad context of the overall shape of the present Indian economy.

The National Labour Commission Report says "A study of the newly developing farms shows the emergence of capitalist agriculture encouraged by the agricultural strategy followed by Government which makes large-scale scientific agriculture profitable. Before 1960 there were only a few pockets of genuine capitalist agriculture in parts of Punjab, Western UP, Central Gujarat, parts of Tamil Nadu and coastal Andhra. Now it is

³Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol 1 (New York, Modern Library), pp. 785-787.

¹Lady Louise E Howard, *Labour in Agriculture An Internal Survey* (London, Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1935), p. 58, cited in Shiva Chandra Jha, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism in India* (Calcutta, Firma K L Mukhopadhyay, 1963), 230

²Shiva Chandra Jha, *Op. Cit.* p. 224.

spreading into other IADP areas."⁴

Francine Frankel, who undertook a study of the impact of the new strategy on the socio-economic relations of the peasantry under the auspices of USAID and completed it in September 1969, has gone little more into the details of this emerging picture of Indian agriculture, taking up five original IADP districts of 114 districts (out of a total of 325 in India)—Ludhiana in Punjab, West Godavari in Andhra Pradesh, Palghat in Kerala, Tanjore in Tamil Nadu and Burdwan in West Bengal for the purpose

Opposing Interests

The main findings of this study are "The IADP, and now the High-Yielding Varieties Programme, have not only intensified the process of economic polarization in the rural areas but they have also contributed to an increasing social estrangement between landlords and tenants and landowners and labourers ... With contractual relationships increasingly replacing customary arrangements in the recruitment of farm labour, and impersonal bargaining sessions becoming the role between landowners and workers, old ideas and inter-dependence are increasingly being replaced by notions of opposing economic or class interests."⁵

Thus, by this so-called green revolution what has been begotten in Indian agriculture is the rural bourgeoisie on one side and the rural proletariat on the other, the two classes needed for the development of capitalism in agriculture. The pure wage-earning agriculture proletariat increased from 27.5 million in 1951 to 31.5 million in 1961, that is, an increase of 14.5 per cent.

What the Home Ministry calls tensions are in fact class struggles, intensified by the Intensive Agriculture Development Programme and the High-Yielding Varieties Programme.

The Indian agricultural policy

since Independence or since the Plans and the so-called green revolution has sown the wind and it is fated to reap the whirlwind. It is inevitable under the present Indian agricultural policy. The situation with the agricultural labourers is mixed up in between this wind and whirlwind.

Now, in order to tackle the problem of the agriculture labourers in a scientific way, it is imperative either you yourself stop this wind in the present political set-up of the country, or let the whirlwind force you to stop it.

In both the cases, the radical cure demands that the growing capitalism in Indian agriculture must be ended and new social relationships be brought into being in the agricultural set-up. In this new social relationship lies the solution of the agricultural labourers in India.

But both the reports have failed to focus attention on this, and, thus, offered no solution of the problem.

Agriculture in India cannot escape from being put on scientific lines, that is, thorough modernization of Indian agriculture is the demand of the socio-economic forces of the economy. The modern scientific know-how, inputs, insecticides, etc., are indispensable for bringing farming in India on scientific lines.

Besides food, even for speeding up the industrialisation of the Indian economy; the "marketable agricultural surplus" is needed, and this can be facilitated by scientific farming.

The hunger for land, about which the Home Ministry report talks and to which, inter alia, it holds the agricultural tension responsible, is something unavoidable with the peasantry in general all over the capitalist world, and there is nothing new with the Indian peasantry.

The total surplus cultivable land even after strict enforcement of ceilings is limited, as corroborated by Government statistics.

But the tillers must have the land. The question, who is who in village, raised by the Home Ministry report, is a very pertinent one and demands solution.

And if agriculture is to be on the scientific basis, the scientific

distribution should be the criterion of economic holding to each family. But what should be the economic holding on which the application of modern scientific means may be remunerative? It has been found that 10 acres are the minimum for making an economic holding.

The distribution of land in the country on this basis, will not solve the problem of landless people. The way out of this mess is the village ownership of land. In the Indian context this is called *Gramdan*. Hence, to have the radical solution of the landless problem is the village ownership of land. This will further facilitate the consolidation of small holdings on which large-scale farming would be facilitated.

Thus, for the thorough modernization of Indian agriculture, it is imperative to have village ownership of land, plus modern scientific know-how, plus village panchayats, as political and administrative framework.

This kind of solution is compatible not only with what the rising historical forces are asking for but also with the past Indian village community system.

If this radical solution is not attempted then some tinkering with the problem, as done by both the reports, can be like this. Strict implementation of land reforms for abolishing intermediaries in land. Land should belong to the tillers, strict enforcement of the land ceilings, enlargement and spread of the village development works; rural works programmes, including rural industries; full employment policy in the tribal areas, as recommended by the Jaya Prakash Committee, should be adopted.

There should be recognition of the agricultural trade unions by the Village Panchayats, as suggested by the Labour Commission Report, to see that the Minimum Agricultural Wages Act gets implemented in the countryside. And an attempt will, thus, be made to bring the agricultural workers on the bargaining table, through the tripartite procedure. The right to work should be granted to the workers by amending Article 16 of the Constitution of India.

⁴Ministry of Labour, Employment and Rehabilitation, Government of India, *Report of the National Commission on Labour* (Delhi, 1969), pp. 407-408.

⁵*Mainstream*, November 29 1969,

Protective Legislation for Tribals

R. K. MISHRA

THE yawning gap between policies and legislation on the one hand, and laws and their implementation on the other, has come into sharp focus in our country recently. The authorities have themselves admitted the appalling shortfall in implementation of land reform measures. But one other aspect of this problem, which is perhaps more urgent, concerns our tribal population. The unrest in pockets of tribal population in various parts of our country makes it all the more urgent that a detailed study be made of the actual treatment meted out to our *adivasis* since Independence as against the legal provisions and declarations made to improve their lot.

In this connection a recent study made by the Evaluation Organisation of Rajasthan regarding protective legislations for the tribals in the State is revealing. The study has brought to light "the alarmingly high unawareness among the *adivasis* of the protective legislation enforced by the State Government".

The Scheduled Areas and the Scheduled Tribes Commission appointed in pursuance of the provisions of article 339 of the Constitution, recommended in 1960 that "a survey should be undertaken in each State with a view to ascertain to what extent the interests of the tribals have suffered and require restoration or restrictive legislative assistance". This recommendation was reiterated at a conference of State Ministers in-charge of welfare of backward classes in July 1962. Not many States have taken care to discharge their obligation in this respect diligently or with an awareness of the serious consequences of neglect of the tribal population.

Even in a State like Rajasthan, where surveys of this type were undertaken, follow-up actions have been conspicuous by their absence. Presumably every State Government is awaiting repetition of Srikakulam in their regions before attending to the problem created by the continued neglect of the tribal population.

All over the country scheduled areas have been declared by Presidential Notification in order to assist tribals to enjoy their existing rights unhindered by others, and to promote their economic, educational and social progress. Being vulnerable to exploitation, their interests were intended to be safeguarded by the Government through legislation and administrative regulation. Besides the State Governments were constitutionally committed to make provisions for greater social amenities and to

implement various programmes for the economic uplift of the depressed classes. They were also to be given adequate representation in the decentralised institutions.

In Rajasthan, the scheduled areas comprise Dungarpur and Banswara districts and Partapgarh tehsil of Chittorgarh district. Of the various tribes living in Rajasthan, the Meenas and the Bhils constitute the largest groups, followed by the Garasias and the Seharias. These tribals are dispersed all over the State and their proportion to the total population varies from 0.2 per cent in Bikaner to 62.6 per cent in Banswara district and 60.2 per cent in Dungarpur district. According to the figures of the last Census, the total tribal population in Rajasthan was 23.09 lakhs—out of which 5.7 lakhs lived in the scheduled areas. The density of tribal population is the highest in Dungarpur and Banswara districts—64.7 and 52.2 per square kilometre, respectively.

Continued Exploitation

The occupational pattern of the tribals reveals their continued poverty in the scheduled areas and continued exploitation in the non-scheduled areas. As compared to non-tribals, a higher percentage of tribals earn their livelihood as cultivators. The difference is more pronounced in the scheduled areas than in the non-scheduled areas. The proportion of tribals who work as agricultural labourers is higher than that of non-tribals. In the State as a whole, a larger proportion of tribals possess holdings of a smaller size, that is, up to 9.9 acres, as compared to the non-tribals. The same position holds good when the comparison is attempted for the non-scheduled area (Table-1). It is significant that in the Category 5-to-9.9 acres, in the lower slab the percentage of tribals is higher uniformly both in the scheduled and the non-scheduled areas.

In accordance with the powers conferred by the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution, the Governor may direct that any particular Act of Parliament or of the State legislature shall not apply to a scheduled area or shall apply to the aforesaid areas subject to some exceptions. He may also make regulations for prohibition or restriction on the transfer or allotment of land and impose regulations on persons who lend money to members of scheduled tribes. The Governor also appoints Tribes Advisory

Council which includes some non-official members too

In Rajasthan, legal steps to provide protection to the scheduled tribes were taken under the Rajasthan Tenancy Act, 1955, the Rajasthan Land Revenue (Allotment of Land for Agricultural Purposes) Rules, 1957, the Rajasthan Panchayat Samities and Zila Parishad Act, 1959, the Rajasthan Sagri System Abolition Act, 1961, and the Rajasthan Relief of Agriculture Indebtedness (Amendment) Act, 1962. Every successive Plan in the State and every Budget has contained provisions for providing social amenities and effecting economic uplift of the scheduled tribes. Reservation in the Government service has continued over the years and was increased from 12.5 per cent to 17 per cent recently. Reservation of 20 per cent seats in all Government colleges, including educational and professional colleges, relaxation in the age for admission by three years, concession of five per cent marks where admissions are held on the basis of merit, full exemption from payment of tuition fees—are some of the concessions given to the tribals in the field of education.

A sample survey of the social amenities provided revealed that in the scheduled area only 8.8 per cent villages had dispensaries as against 20 per cent in the non-scheduled area, 11.8 per cent villages in scheduled area had playgrounds as against 20 per cent in the non-scheduled areas. The vast disparity between the scheduled and non-scheduled areas in regard to some of the other amenities is indicated in Table II. It is surprising that the very purpose of carving out scheduled areas, that is, to give greater and wider amenities in pockets where adivasi population is concentrated, should not have materialised and the differences between the amenities available in the scheduled and the non-scheduled areas should continue to be so glaring.

Only 3.3 per cent of the tribal population residing in the scheduled area reported any knowledge of the constitutional rights guaranteed to them. The condition in non-scheduled area, though somewhat better, was also much below the desirable mark. Only 20 per cent in the non-scheduled area were aware of these rights. The colossal ignorance indicates lack of education and failure of the local administration to educate them in respect of the protection and the concessions granted legally to them. In fact, a little over two per cent tribals only exercised their rights to improve their conditions. This was confined generally to *taccavi*, subsidies, education and employment. None of them was aware of the specific constitutional safeguards, available to them.

Almost 91 per cent of the tribal population in the State is engaged in agriculture either as owners of small uneconomic holdings or as agricultural labourers. In the scheduled area of Dungarpur and Banswara districts, 95.9 per cent of the tribals were engaged in agriculture. In the scheduled area, the average size of the holdings per family was less than three acres. Besides the uneconomic size of the holdings, the land in many cases is not very productive and is exposed to soil erosion. In spite of these limitations and the depressing economic conditions, the tribals in general and particularly those residing in the scheduled areas, had a very poor knowledge about the legislative protection granted to them by the State Government.

The ignorance is evident from the fact that of all the landless tribals, not one was aware of the provision made in the Bhoodan Yagna Act for allotting 1/3 land to them. They were also completely ignorant that a provision had been made in the Rajasthan Land Revenue Act for allotting 25 per cent of the unoccupied land to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. The tremendous gap between

TABLE I

Area	Category	Percentage to		Total	Households of		Households with		Total
		Less than one acre	1.0 to 9.9 acres		10.0 to 14.9 acres	15.0 to 49.9 acres	50.0 acres and above	Unspecified	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
(i) Rajasthan	T (Tribal)	2.4	43.8	27.9	11.6	12.4	0.9	1.0	100.0 (76433)
	NT (Non-Tribal)	1.6	27.1	22.2	13.8	26.9	7.2	1.2	100.0 (432946)
(ii) Scheduled Area	T	2.4	50.9	30.9	9.6	5.3	0.2	0.7	100.0 (19483)
	NT	4.6	54.0	26.0	8.4	5.6	0.3	0.9	100.0 (1916)
(a) Dungarpur	T	3.1	48.7	29.8	10.7	6.9	0.3	0.5	100.0 (8258)
	NT	4.9	51.4	26.6	9.4	6.5	0.3	0.9	100.0 (4891)
(b) Banswara	T	1.9	52.6	31.1	8.7	4.2	0.1	0.8	100.0 (11225)
	NT	4.3	57.2	25.7	7.0	4.6	0.3	1.0	100.0 (4025)
(iii) Non-Scheduled Area	T	2.4	41.4	26.9	12.3	14.8	1.2	1.0	100.0 (56950)
	NT	1.5	26.5	22.1	13.9	27.4	7.4	1.2	100.0 (424030)

the facilities of irrigation, fertilizers, marketing and improved implements available in the scheduled areas where the adivasis population is concentrated, and the non-scheduled areas of the State is a glaring illustration of the colossal neglect of the tribal population (Table III).

In the scheduled area 35.1 per cent households and 72.6 per cent households in the non-scheduled area replied in the affirmative when they were asked whether they were free to transfer their lands; but 54.1 per cent of the tribals of the scheduled area did not know about the legal protection granted to them with regard to transfer of land, that is, their holdings could not be given by sale or gift to a non-tribal person. Surprisingly, in the non-scheduled area, where the knowledge of this legal protection is more necessary to save the adivasis from the powerful non-tribal land grabbers, awareness of this law is even less; 61.8 per cent of the households in the non-scheduled area did not know of this legal protection.

The Sagri system is one of the most inhuman systems of money lending in the country. Under this practice, the tribals were exposed to the worst form of exploitation. The conditions on which money is lent include mortgaging of a member of the family against the loan. The mortgaged person is required to work as a slave of the moneylender till his loan is cleared off. During this period he gets only his daily meals. In 1961, the Rajasthan Sagri System Abolition Act was enforced and the Sagri system was legally abolished. But the survey revealed that

TABLE-II

SOCIAL AMENITIES IN SELECTED VILLAGES

	Percentage of villages having amenities	
	Scheduled Area	Non-Scheduled Area
1 School		
(a) Fully equipped	7.2	32.7
(b) Well-staffed	20.0	72.7
(c) Located in good building	16.1	56.4
2 Dispensaries	8.8	20.0
3 Post Office	20.6	20.0
4 Playground	11.8	20.0
5 Drinking Water Well	61.8	80.0
6 Village & Small Scale Industries	2.9	10.0
7 Cooperative Credit Society	50.0	90.0
8 Approach Road	14.7	70.0

TABLE-III

Facility	Percentage of Households having facility	
	Scheduled Area	Non-Scheduled Area
Irrigation	6.9	64.7
Supply of fertilisers	30.9	78.4
Marketing & Storage	4.4	39.2
Improved Implements	6.9	41.1

TABLE-IV

FACILITIES MADE USE OF BY SCHEDULED TRIBES

Facilities	Percentage of Households making use	
	Scheduled Area	Non-Scheduled Area
Credit facilities	16.1	56.4
Irrigation facilities	6.9	64.4
Use of fertilizers	30.9	78.4
Marketing & Storage facilities	4.4	39.2
Use of improved implements	6.9	41.1
Facilities to start village and cottage industries	48.3	31.8
Membership of cooperative Societies	27.3	36.4
Minimum education facilities		
(a) For self	4.1	23.6
(b) For children	64.9	87.3
Medical services	1.2	47.3
Maternity	1.9	3.6
Material for house constructions	65.5	85.5

TABLE-V

ATTITUDE OF OFFICIALS TOWARDS TRIBAL POPULATION

Attitude	Scheduled Area	
	Positive	Negative
Cooperative and sympathetic	23.1	76.5
Hopeful and encouraging	23.3	76.3
Indifferent and non-cooperative	76.5	22.9
Alive to your problem	23.8	75.4
Interested in over-all upliftment of tribals	20.0	79.4
Safeguarding the rights of tribals	19.6	80.3

66.5 per cent residents in the scheduled area were still conversant with the Sagri system for advancing loans. Of these 80.1 per cent in the scheduled area reported that the pernicious practice was still prevalent. About 10 per cent of the informants covered by the survey, reported to have themselves rendered such forced labour. Only two per cent were aware of the reliefs granted to them through the legal provision for scaling down as well as cancellation of debts.

The fact that the tribals continued to be exposed to the savagery of Sagri also underlined their depressing economic conditions and their inability to secure credit from other sources. In the scheduled areas, the adivasis gave first priority to provision of subsidy, credit and loan facilities, the allotment of land and the starting of village cottage industries followed in that order. The utilisation of facilities by the scheduled tribes reveals, once again, the glaring disparity between conditions in the scheduled area and the non-scheduled areas (Table IV). It also indicates that the tempo of development in the scheduled areas has been slow and the purpose for which such areas were sought to be carved out has not been fully realised.

In the sphere of education, 95 per cent of the informants in the scheduled areas reported that no facilities were available for adult education; 34.1 reported this deficiency even for their children. Out of those who held the view that minimum educational facilities were being provided to their children, almost half of them in the scheduled areas reported that scholarships, freeships and mid-day meals were not being provided to them. More than 75 per cent reported non-availability of free books and hostel facilities.

Ayurvedic treatment was received by 84.9 per cent persons in the scheduled areas, while 74.5 per cent in the non-scheduled area were receiving allopathic treatment. This contrast highlights the non-availability of the corresponding medical facilities in the scheduled area. A negligible member of tribal households owned pucca houses, some had kucha houses and the remaining were living in huts. 35.5 per cent households in the scheduled area could not get sufficient material for house construction.

In regard to the Panchayati Raj institutions, 34.3 per cent in the scheduled areas and 58 per cent in the non-scheduled area held the view that their representation was inadequate, 83.3 per cent in the scheduled area intimated that the Panch or the MLA elected by them did not enquire about their

difficulties. The attitude of the officials working in the area also evoked dissatisfaction from the tribal population. They felt that the officials were indifferent and non-cooperative. The rating of the tribals on this question and the positive and negative responses are indicated in Table V.

Seeds of Discontent

The overall conclusion from these facts is obvious. The protective legislation for the welfare of the tribal population has miserably failed to achieve its purpose. Non-official agencies have not taken adequate interest in educating the tribal population about their rights and to mobilise them to ensure that these rights are not denied to them. The administration by and large has treated these protective measures as scraps of paper. The Government has not considered it necessary to fix the responsibilities of various administrative agencies regarding implementation of various protective legislations or to ensure that the concessions, facilities and amenities announced by it actually reach the tribal population. This has resulted in continued exploitation of the tribal people and the seeds of discontent can already be seen.

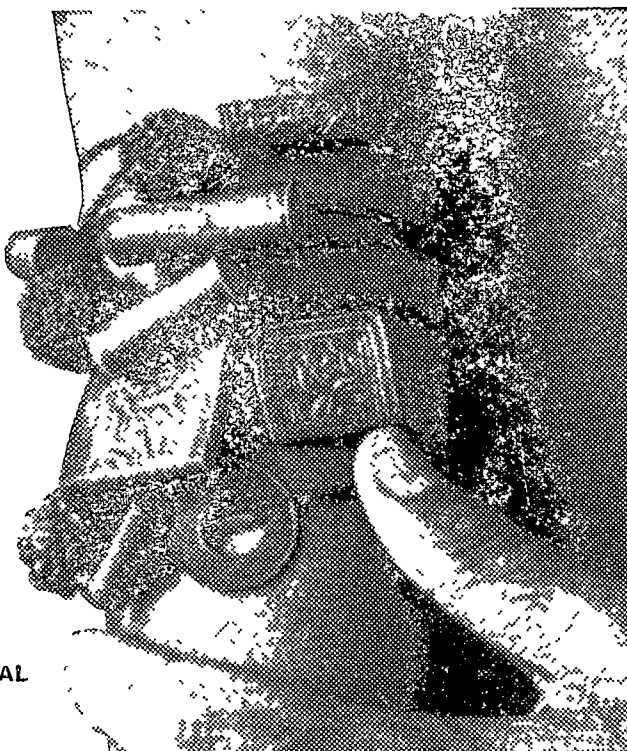
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Case for Agricultural Taxation

SURESH CHANDRA SRIVASTAVA

IT is possible to make out a convincing case for agricultural taxation in India. Taxation of agriculture has never materialised to any significant degree in this country. The two important direct taxes in agricultural sector are land revenue and agricultural income-tax. Farmers also pay other direct taxes such as estate duty and perhaps in the near future would have to pay wealth tax too, but they are of a minor nature in the scheme of taxation. The fiscal importance of land revenue and agricultural income-tax is diminishing. While in 1938-39, land revenue formed four per cent of the national income originating in agriculture, this percentage declined to 1.0 in 1950-51, and to 0.8 in 1966-67. This is patently ridiculous as compared to Japan where land tax accounted for 8.6 per cent of the total tax revenue in 1875-76 and 4.5 per cent in 1893-94.¹

Agricultural income-tax formed 0.07 per cent of the national income originating in the agricultural sector in 1950-51, a year before the advent of planning in this country. It rose to 0.17 per cent by the end of First Plan. But thereafter it tended to decline, and stood at 0.14 per cent at the end of the Second Plan, at 0.10 per cent at the end of Third Plan, and at 0.8 per cent in 1966-67. This is despite the fact that our Plans have been agriculture-oriented. The investment in agriculture and irrigation during the First Plan was of the order of Rs 724 crores, Rs 979 crores in the Second Plan and Rs 1,761 crores in the Third Plan. During

the interregnum between the Third and the Fourth Plans, the outlay for agricultural programme is likely to amount to Rs 1,481 crores. In the Draft Fourth Plan, Rs 2,217 crores has been earmarked for agriculture and irrigation, and further increased recently.

Agriculture is the key sector in the Indian economy as it provides livelihood for nearly 70 per cent of the population and accounts for 40 to 50 per cent of the national income.

Key Sector in Economy

The contribution of agriculture, however, to country's savings, financial resources or tax revenue is not in keeping with its size and importance. On the other hand, its contribution by way of direct taxes has fallen from Rs 106.68 crores in 1960-61 to Rs 100.09 crores in 1966-67. Agriculture has not contributed as much to the economy as it could have. Yet much of the resources for its development come from sources other than itself. It must yield enough to finance at least sizable part of its own development.

Slowly but surely, Indian agriculture is getting modernised. Already a good deal of effort and funds have gone into this task of transformation. Even in the coming years investment in agriculture and irrigation would be substantial. Providing irriga-

¹For detailed discussion see, B.F. Johnston, "Agricultural Productivity and Economic Development in Japan," *Journal of the Political Economy*, Vol. LIX, pp. 498-513, and J. Oikawa and H. Rosovsky, "The Role of Agriculture in Modern Japanese Economic Development," *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, October 1960, Part III, pp. 43-96.

tion facilities to 26 million acres, covering 32 million acres under high-yielding varieties, extending plant protection facilities to 13.7 million acres and supplying thousands of tonnes of Nitrogenous and phosphatic fertilizers to attain a compound-growth rate of 5.92 per cent in foodgrain and 5.01 per cent in non-foodgrain production, indeed constitute a stupendous task.

The fifth Finance Commission has drawn our attention to the vast expenditure needed for the large number of schemes being taken up under the Fourth Plan for agricultural development. The benefits of such schemes have undoubtedly been improving the conditions of agriculturists in many ways but the smaller cultivators who comprise a large section of the rural community, have not gained very much despite additional investment in the sector. An extensive area has still to be covered by the development schemes. Again, a number of services, Central and State, have to be rendered to the agriculturists free of cost or at concessional rates—rural electrification, distribution of improved seeds, pesticides, fertilisers, pump-sets, implements and rural credit. It is not practicable to charge differential rates from more prosperous farmers. The best way to secure a share of the increased margins in the agricultural sector would be to levy an effective income-tax.

Rising Income from Agriculture

The increasing expenditure on agricultural development and other related fields has resulted in an improvement of productivity of land and income of the rural sector. The income of this sector during the quinquennium 1961-62 to 1965-66 has gone up by approximately 26 to 30 per cent and productivity by approximately 20 to 25 per cent. During the Fourth Plan, it is estimated that there will be a compound rate of growth of 5.5 per cent per annum in agricultural production. The agricultural sector has also benefitted by the relatively greater rise in the prices of agricultural products.

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During the Third Plan alone, the wholesale price index of food articles rose by 48 per cent as against an increase of 36 per cent in the wholesale price index of all commodities.

A study² of inter-sectoral terms of trade in recent years shows that the terms of trade have moved up in favour of agriculture which presumably has improved the tax paying capacity of the agricultural sector. Dr A M. Khusro correctly concludes "Since inter-sectoral terms of trade have been gradually moving in favour of farmers and against non-farmers between 1940 and 1957 and again between 1954-1961 there is a presumption that the tax paying capacity of the agricultural sector has increased proportionately more than that of the non-agricultural sector."³ There is, thus, every justification for taxing the agricultural sector

It is a well-established fact that rural sector is under-taxed. A comparative study of the rates of taxation of farm incomes and non-farm incomes reveals the patently inequitable situation obtaining in Indian income taxation. -People with income around Rs 4,000 or Rs 5,000 a year in the urban areas pay more taxes than their counterparts in the rural areas.⁴ A non-agricultural family earning Rs 76,500 per annum would pay as taxes 51.5 per cent of its income as against only 5.3 per cent in the case of an agricultural family.⁵ Land owners in some States at present pay no more than the land revenue which is only a rough acreage tax, even on an income as big as Rs 50,000 while a salary earner of Rs 10,000 has to pay income-tax of Rs 560.⁶

It has been pointed out in a study by National Council of Applied Economic Research that "the urban sector output is

subject to about 22 per cent in taxes whereas rural sector goes only for five per cent. These percentages have more or less remained constant over the last decade."⁷ The rural sector pays 2.6 per cent of its income by way of taxes as against 17.4 per cent of the net income paid by the urban sector.⁸ Dr K.N. Raj, in a study, observes. "the increase in the revenues since 1952-53 has been realised more from the urban than the rural sector and while Government taxation has probably absorbed nearly 40 per cent of the increase in incomes in the urban sector, the share of the Government in the increased income of the rural sector has been perhaps not more than about 14 per cent or 15 per cent."⁹

Direct taxation on agriculturists so far is thus in accord with modern concepts of progressivity. Whether or not the agricultural sector should be more lightly taxed than the non-agricultural sector may be a matter of opinion, but it is a fact that the prosperous part of the agricultural sector is now definitely under-taxed. And as agricultural incomes grow, the disparity will become more pronounced."¹⁰

Within the rural sector itself under the existing tax system, the poor farmer is relatively much more taxed than the well-to-do farmers. This is because of the fact that the direct taxes in agricultural sector are only nominal and the bulk of the revenue derived from this sector is in the form of indirect taxes.

Moreover, there is a selective approach in agriculture today. Under the Intensive Agricultural Development and the other selected programmes we are concentrating only on 10 per cent of the cultivable land in the country with assured irrigation high-yielding seeds, fertilisers, pesticides and other inputs. The

farmers in these areas are naturally making much more than their counterparts on the remaining 90 per cent of the cultivable land who have to pay the same taxes as the one in the IADP and IAAP areas. In other words, the poor farmers are subsidising the affluent farmers. This anomaly can be removed by tapping the top 10 per cent farmers a little more heavily. There is no reason as to why the beneficiaries of the IADP and IAAP areas should not be taxed to the extent of 25 per cent of their additional income.

The agricultural sector is under-taxed in respect of indirect taxes, too. The Taxation Enquiry Commission (1953-54) examined the question of disparity in the incidence of indirect taxation for rural and urban households and concluded that the incidence of indirect taxes, Centre and State taxes combined, for each group is higher in the urban sector than in the rural sector. Using the same data, Dr I S Gulati concludes that "the excess of tax incidence on non-agricultural over agricultural households can be said to range between 30 to 40 per cent."¹¹ He adds that "beyond the level of an annual expenditure of Rs 3,600, the disparity, widens rapidly, for instance a non-agricultural family earning around Rs 5,542 would pay nearly 74 per cent more in taxes than an agricultural family with the same annual expenditure."¹²

A study by the Tax Research unit of the Ministry of Finance (1958-59) shows that during 1953-54 urban households paid twice the proportion of consumer expenditure paid in indirect taxes by rural household. By 1958-59, the proportion paid by the urban households became 2.1 times that paid by the rural households.¹³ A current study¹⁴ (1968-69) by the Ministry of Finance reveals that while the proportion of indirect taxation in the total consumer ex-

²S.C. Srivastava, "Price Policy in a Developing Economy, with special reference to India," unpublished Ph D Thesis (1967), pp 102-109

³A.M. Khusro, "Taxation of agricultural land—A Proposal," *The Economic Weekly*, Annual Number, February 1963

⁴S.C. Srivastava, "Taxing the Rural Sector", *Yojana*, June 1, 1969, p 24

⁵I S Gulati, *Resource Prospects of the Third Five Year Plan*, 1960 p 134.

⁶S V Char, *op cit*, p 28

⁷*Techno-Economic Survey of Uttar Pradesh*, p 188

⁸S.C. Srivastava, *op. cit.*

⁹K N Raj "Resources for the Third Plan", *The Economic Weekly*, Annual Number, January 1969.

¹⁰*Report of the Fifth Finance Commission*, 1969, pp 83-84

¹¹I S. Gulati, *op cit*

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³S C. Srivastava, Ph D Thesis, *op. cit.*, p 213

¹⁴*The Economic Times*, December 26, 1969, p. 4.

penditure rose from 5.7 per cent in 1958-59 to 11.1 per cent in 1963-64 the incidence continued to remain progressive. The tax element in the case of urban households worked out to 16.6 per cent as against eight per cent in the case of rural households. Of indirect taxes amounting to Rs 1,515 crores in 1963-64, which was taken up for the study, 40 per cent was borne by the urban sector accounting for 18.5 per cent of the population, and 60 per cent by the rural sector accounting for 81.5 per cent of the total population.

An analysis of State-wise incidence of indirect taxation for 1963-64 demonstrates that the per capita monthly tax (Central and State) ranged between Rs 1.65 for Orissa and Rs 3.78 for undivided Punjab. Compared to the all-India figure of Rs 2.68, the per capita tax element was higher in Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Punjab and West Bengal and lower in other States, except Kerala and Jammu and Kashmir where per capita tax was about the same as the all-India average. As a percentage of consumer expenditure, the per capita tax varied from 7.3 per cent in Bihar to 13.04 per cent in Maharashtra, with the all-India average at 10.12 per cent. This pattern of agricultural taxation infringes the canon of equity. It would, therefore, be in fitness of things that inter-sectoral inequity in taxation should be removed.

It has been argued that in view of the general poverty in the rural area, we should not tax this sector. This argument is not tenable because when a proposal for taxing the rural sector is mooted, the concept of average per capita income is irrelevant. The fact is that the top 10 to 15 per cent farmers own two-thirds of the total cultivated area. The total income from agriculture in 1964-65 was little over Rs 100,000 crores and the total area under cultivation was a little over 300 million acres. This means roughly Rs 300 an acre. These big farmers who have a little over 65 per cent of the area under them, account for about Rs 6,000 crores of national income. If this income is taxed even at five per

cent, Rs 300 crores can be collected annually. This would come to Rs 1,500 crores over a period of a single Five Year Plan.¹⁵

The Green Revolution is making a significant dent on the rural economy. In Punjab, specially, the number of well-to-do farmers is increasing every year. These farmers use superior physical inputs and reap rich harvests. As a result, Punjab, with just 6.35 per cent of the total cropped area in the country, accounts for 6.71 per cent of the country's total cereal production, 17.5 per cent of pulses, 9.44 per cent of sugarcane, 17.70 per cent of cotton and 3.80 per cent of oilseeds. Agriculture in some other States like Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra is prosperous. The "poverty of the people" argument, therefore, does not stand.

There is a scope for tapping a part of the rural incomes from yet another point of view. According to the National Sample Survey, in the agricultural sector people do save, as much as 2.7 per cent of their incomes and spend as much as 10.36 per cent of the consumption expenditure on items other than food, such as ceremonials, intoxicants, refreshments, tobacco, pan, etc. Indian farmers would not, therefore, be put to great burden if their incomes are taxed.

Taxation of agricultural incomes is desirable for various other considerations. It is now accepted that increased agricultural taxation would increase market arrivals. Augmentation of food supply by about three per cent per annum is necessary not only to ensure that the additional population gets the bare minimum standard of nutrition but also to better the nutritional standard. Professor Colin Clark shares this view. Further, with larger market arrivals, it would be possible to shunt disguised unemployment from agriculture to non-agricultural activities. Also, economists believe that farm taxation would promote economic stability and bring more and more areas under the monetised sector. The tax would also

equip the Government with one more fiscal tool to practise incentive taxation.

It is generally argued that it is not proper to introduce agricultural income tax as farm incomes are unstable owing to uncertain monsoon. This is true to some extent. But it should not be forgotten that there are vast areas with assured water supplies and excellent irrigation facilities, and that farmers in these regions do have stable farm incomes. These farmers were not affected by droughts. In fact, they have gained tremendously by the steep rise in prices of foodgrains.

It is apprehended that agricultural income-tax would punish the more efficient of the farmers and induce them to substitute the more profitable crops, say jute or cotton, by less profitable crops like wheat and barley. This is, however, not true so far as practical experience goes. Those who entertain such fears should talk to an affluent farmer from Punjab and elsewhere. This might happen in cases where tax rates are so high that it acts as a disincentive and when such a farmer is ignorant of a method of evasion, under-reporting and the like. It is hard to come across an individual who would like to have less income rather than pay more taxes except in marginal cases where the additional tax burden is more than the increase in income. We do not have instances of joint-stock companies who prefer to be in a lower income-tax bracket under fear of a heavier burden of tax.

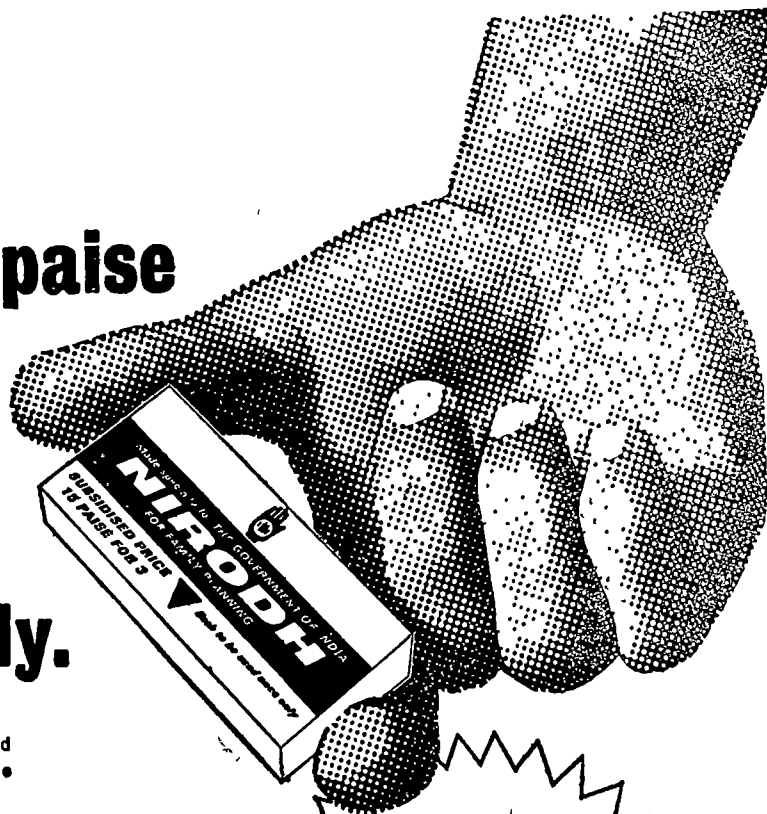
As far as Indian agriculturists are concerned, at present they are not paying any taxes on their farm incomes. There is, thus, every reason to believe that they would like to earn more rather than less.

Thus, the exigencies of economic development, the improvement in the taxable capacity of the agriculturists under planned phases of development, the latente under-taxation of agriculture both in respect of direct and indirect taxes, dictates of inter and intra-sectoral inequity and the economic considerations enumerated above, demand that the agricultural sector should be duly taxed.

¹⁵ S C Srivastava, *Taxing the Rural Sector*



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Workers in 1969

THE two opposing trends in the situation of the world's workers continued in 1969. In the industrialised countries, the threat of unemployment receded and a revival of prosperity was noted, while in the developing countries, workers remained at a low living standard which fell increasingly behind. This is the main conclusion arising from statistics gathered by the International Labour Office.

In most industrialised countries, the level of employment increased, unemployment fell, and the increase in prices was less than the increase in nominal wages. However, there was some uneasiness in certain countries faced with accelerating consumer price increases and, in places, austerity programmes intended to offset inflationary tendencies encountered opposition from the workers, often leading to labour disputes.

Statistical information received from developing countries remains sparse. But it shows that unemployment and under-employment continue to be widespread, that the labour surplus is increasing, and that monetary difficulties in these countries are reflected in deteriorating terms of trade which diminish further their already limited chances of creating enough productive jobs.

General World Situation

The year 1969 was marked by a strong economic expansion in the industrialised countries, although the rate of expansion slowed in the closing months.

Unemployment fell in three-quarters of the countries for which information is available. In some places unemployment existed alongside a labour shortage because of an imbalance between the type of people seeking work and the type of job on offer, which was altering rapidly as a result of structural changes in production.

Employment levels in manufacturing industries rose in all the industrialised countries, though the improvement was often greater in the first half of the year. The general level of employment also rose almost everywhere, despite a reduction in the number of agricultural workers.

Increases in consumer prices in 1969 were in general considerably higher than in the preceding years; one country in three had increases of more than five per cent. However, some countries which had suffered a considerable degree of inflation for several years, saw a marked reduction in the rate of price rises.

Money wages increased in almost every country for which statistics are available, and since prices rose relatively more slowly, real wages also followed an upward trend. It should be noted however that in some countries the increase in weekly earnings was less than that of hourly wages because of a reduction in hours of work.

After falling in almost one third of the countries for which statistics were available in 1967 and 1968, employment rose during 1969 in virtually every country which supplied data to the International Labour Office.

Level of Employment

Employment in manufacturing industries over the past twelve months rose in 24 of the 25 countries for which there are figures, including Italy, where, however, the *general level* of employment fell. In several countries, including Austria, Canada, Denmark, France, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Yugoslavia, employment in manufacturing industries had fallen in 1967 and 1968. The greatest increases took place in Ireland, Israel, New Zealand and Rumania, where they exceeded five per cent. Increases ranging from three to five per cent occurred in seven countries (Austria, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, Poland, Republic of South Africa and Yugoslavia). There was an increase of between one and three per cent in eleven countries (Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Puerto Rico, Spain and Sweden), and of less than one per cent in the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Of the 25 countries in this section, only Switzerland had a reduced level of employment in manufacturing industries, but the fall—of only 0.5 per cent—was less than that of the preceding five years.

Available statistics for 19 countries show that *employment in all non-agricultural sector* rose nearly everywhere, though by less than three per cent in general. There were, however, increases ranging from three to five per cent in Finland, Hungary, New Zealand, Poland and United States of America, and of more than five per cent in Israel, Puerto Rico and Yugoslavia. In Italy and South Korea, on the other hand, the level of non-agricultural employment remained practically unchanged over the past year.

Information on the *general level of employment* is available for only 17 countries. It shows that as a result of an employment recession in agriculture,

accompanied in places by a reduction of the number of workers in mining and quarrying, the general level of employment rose by more than three per cent in only five countries (Finland, Israel, Poland, Puerto Rico and Yugoslavia). The increase amounted to less than one per cent in Austria, Japan and Sweden. In South Korea and the United Kingdom, the general level of employment fell slightly.

In Italy, the general level of employment fell by just over one per cent (274,000 persons) between July 1968 and July 1969, although the number of salaried workers increased by 120,000. This fall was the result of the drop of nearly 400,000 in the number of self-employed and of unpaid family workers recorded in the labour statistics.

Rise in Unemployment

The rise in unemployment noted towards the end of 1966 and in 1967 in the majority of countries publishing figures on this subject generally came to a halt in 1968 and, in some 30 countries, unemployment fell during the past twelve months. Sixteen of these countries are in Europe, where an increasing labour shortage has been noted. At the end of October 1969, for example, for every unemployed person there were seven vacancies in the Federal Republic of Germany and 46 in Switzerland, despite the presence in these countries of large numbers of foreign workers. To deal with the labour shortage in certain sectors or professions in Japan, special measures were taken to encourage part-time employment of women with family responsibilities.

The greatest reductions—over 50 per cent—were recorded in Israel and New Zealand. In five countries (Denmark, Finland, the Federal Republic of Germany, Norway and Zambia) the number of unemployed fell by between 25 and 50 per cent over the past twelve months. There was also a marked reduction in unemployment in Austria, Belgium, Central African Republic, France, Ghana, Malta, Netherlands, Singapore and Sweden.

In the Federal Republic of Germany, the number of unemployed totalled 119,000 in November 1969, compared with 196,000 in November 1968 and 395,000 in November 1967. The number of unemployed has been falling steadily in South Korea for more than five years. In Finland, an average level of unemployment of less than three per cent of the total labour force was indicated for 1969, compared with four per cent in 1968. In France, where vacancies almost doubled between October 1968 and October 1969, the number seeking jobs fell from 260,000 to 218,000. Israel's monthly average total of unemployed fell considerably in 1968, and in 1969 it reached its lowest level since 1948. Italy had 30,000 fewer job-seekers in July 1969 than in July 1968. In Puerto Rico between March and July 1969, the number of unemployed represented less than ten per cent of the labour force for the first time since 1965. A large increase in the number of unemployed registered in Zambia during the first seven months of 1969 was followed by a sharp drop which brought unemployment in September and October down to the level of January 1964.

However, unemployment rose during 1969 in about ten of the countries for which information is available, including Burma, Chile, India and Sierra Leone, and at the end of the year also in Canada, United Kingdom and United States of America. Unemployment pursued a parallel course in these last three countries. From January to August 1969 its level for each month was equal to or lower than that for the corresponding month of 1968, but from September 1969 it was higher than that for the last months of 1968. In the United Kingdom, the increase was due largely to the number of workers temporarily laid off, which tripled between October 1968 and October 1969. In the United States of America the monthly labour force sample survey showed 2,300,000 unemployed in May, the lowest figure for this month since 1953. Although there is usually a seasonal fall in unemployment in the United States of America between August and September, there were 100,000 more unemployed in September 1969 than in August 1969, and despite a decrease noted in October and November, unemployment remained slightly higher at the end of 1969 than it had been at the end of 1968.

Higher Consumer prices

Data from some 110 countries and territories show that the rise in consumer prices continued in all parts of the world in 1969, especially in the industrialised countries. This rise was in general at a faster rate than in 1967 and 1968, particularly in the second half of 1969.

The increase exceeded ten per cent in 15 countries: Brazil, Chile, South Korea, South Viet-Nam and Uruguay (in all of these the annual increase exceeded ten per cent for the sixth year running), Colombia, Congo (Kinshasa), Iraq, Ireland, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Portugal and Sudan.

Increases ranging from five to ten per cent were observed in 22 countries and territories, including Argentina, France, Japan, Netherlands, United Kingdom and United States of America. The rise in consumer prices was between three and five per cent in 30 countries and territories: ten in Africa, five in America, six in Asia, seven in Europe and two in Oceania. These countries included Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Italy, Morocco, Mexico, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Tunisia and United Arab Republic.

Thirty-two countries, including Australia, Bolivia, Cambodia, India, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Thailand, Venezuela and nine European states recorded consumer price increases of from one to three per cent. Prices rose by less than one per cent in Central African Republic, Malaysia, Trinidad and Tobago, and St. Lucia, while they were practically unchanged in Congo (Brazzaville), Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Kenya and Singapore. Consumer price indices fell by one to four per cent in Cameroon, Guatemala and Syria.

Some countries which had experienced considerable inflation in previous years saw their situation

(Continued on page 38)

MAINSTREAM

Unemployment in Fourth Plan

S. C. NANDWANI

IN an underdeveloped, over-populated country, the problem of unemployment is always prone to assume serious proportions. In India, too, the problem is acute with a tendency to become chronic. It is because of the high rate of population growth, which at present is nearly two and a half per cent per annum. Every year the number of the unemployed swells by a few millions in the country.

Prima facie it may appear to be anachronistic that an underdeveloped economy which, on the one hand, suffers from shortage of goods and services, should, on the other, be labouring under insufficient employment opportunities, which in turn leads to surplus labour force. But in a country like India that precarious situation does exist and results in low standard of living, poverty and huge national waste of human power. In developed countries unemployment is caused by the temporary decline in the demand on account of trade fluctuations, or there may be small frictional or seasonal unemployment. But in India unemployment and underemployment have become regular features of our vast economy.

A critical study of the employment pattern of a country would reveal certain factors which may primarily be responsible for unemployment. First, there may be the Keynesian type of unemployment arising out of the deficiency in the aggregate effective demand. Secondly, it may

be of the chronic type arising out of the price-cost disequilibrium. Lastly, shortages of capital equipment may also result in widespread unemployment in the country.

An examination of the Indian situation shows that we are facing all these types of unemployment. Apart from the visible unemployment in the rural areas, the unemployment of the disguised variety is also in evidence. This again is counted in the unemployment figures for the purposes of economic development. So our planners can ill afford the luxury of ignoring this vital factor.

Main Task

As such removal of underemployment and disguised unemployment should as much be the task of economic development as of providing more employment opportunities. People apparently seem employed but actually they are not. There is widespread unemployment of this variety in the whole agrarian set up of the country.

According to one estimate, about 20 per cent of the people employed in agriculture are disguisedly unemployed.

Besides there are very many people who are either unemployed for the whole year or remain unemployed for a major portion of the year. It arises out of the semi-stagnant nature of the rural economy with predominant concentration of human labour on agriculture, and rapid growth of population. Lack of capital equipment and immobility of labour, coupled with the conservative character of the rural population, seriously aggravate

the problem of rural unemployment.

But the problem is equally menacing in the urban industrial sector. There has been negligible increase in the employment opportunities in the industrial sector because of its unbalanced development and markedly slow rate of progress.

Unemployment ranks high among the educated and among the unskilled labourers. The rapid rate at which the Indian universities are turning out graduates every year is another important reason for unemployment among the educated people, for they are not equipped with adequate vocational qualifications which could help them in adjusting themselves to the economic pattern of the country.

Far Cry

The Draft Fourth Plan aims at bringing about equality and social justice, but completely ignores the problem of unemployment. Though somewhere it mentions that creation of more employment opportunities will be one of the important objective of the Fourth Plan, the Plan's lack of attention on this front is reflected by its ignorance about even the approximate level of unemployment prevailing at the beginning of the Plan and its failure to formulate a similar figure about the employment opportunities to be created during the Plan period.

Nevertheless, certain unofficial figures and estimates provided by the earlier Plan projections reveal the gravity of the problem. The Fourth Plan, like the Third, will not be able to drive away the ghost of unemployment from the country. Full employment in India seems to be a far cry.

Though the Draft Plan has not been able to give the exact figure of the employment opportunities to be created, it is estimated that the Plan will provide employment to an additional 15 million people in the country. The increase in the labour force during the Plan period is going to be nothing short of 21 millions. The total unemployment figure will be close to 33 millions.

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if we go by the official estimate of 12 millions unemployed by the end of the year 1968. This shows that the problem is massive and growing

Can our Fourth Plan create so many employment opportunities? This is a question which is rather not answered particularly in the context of our achievements so far. Not only this the financial provisions of the Fourth Plan and the pattern of investment appear to make the fulfilment of the targets impossible. The need, therefore, of taking effective measures to fight this menace cannot be over emphasised.

The road from underemployment, coupled with an economy burdened with over-population is, however, long and the rate of progress in this direction is disquietingly slow. Fourth Plan should have given employment the first and urgent priority and capital investment made in such a way as to contribute more towards organised consumer goods industries

It would have been better if the Fourth Plan were a consumer goods Plan. It would have been conducive in providing more employment opportunities, holding the price line and avoiding further inflationary pressures.

Lopsided Priorities

If all goes well with the Plan, it might achieve the target of providing 15 million new jobs but it would still leave about 18 millions without employment. One is surprised at the type of priority objective that the Plan lays down to reduce income disparities and regional imbalances through greater equality in income and wealth, and progressive reduction in the concentration of economic power.

What social justice can be given to the 18 million unemployed at the fag end of the Fourth Plan even if a more revolutionary legislation on private property is injected into the social life? It would be more an eyewash rather than have any meaningful content in it

The Planning Commission appears to have been working under the wrong assumption that

much of the employment opportunities can be created through a properly worked out programme of labour intensive cottage and small-scale industries.

This policy was justified on the grounds of capital deficiency and the dire necessity of building up a sound industrial base by providing heavy and key industries which required large amounts of investment expenditure to be incurred. This policy left almost insignificant funds for the organised consumer goods industries

Faulty Strategy

Accordingly a programme of capital, light, cottage, and small-scale industries was not only to meet the demand of the consumer goods but at the same time to create very many employment opportunities, because of the labour-intensive nature of the jobs. But this strategy could neither meet the demand of the consumer goods nor create substantial additional employment

All those cottage and small-scale industries which required small amounts of capital and skill were not productive enough and could not compete with the organised consumer goods industries at home leave alone succeed in creating an expected export market. Because of the high cost and the low output, these industries could not create much employment in spite of their being labour intensive.

Again those small-scale industries which required large amounts of capital and highly advanced techniques could not fit in our programme of industrialisation because of the shortage of capital and its essential diversion towards the basic and key sectors. Now these heavy industries, even after claiming most of the capital, could not create any substantial employment opportunities in the immediate future

Cottage and small-scale industries may be helpful in eradicating under-employment from the agricultural sector or creating a few more jobs. But the ultimate solution of the problem is to come out of the increased output, which can be made possible not

by the establishment of subsidised cottage and small-scale industries but by adopting a systematic approach towards organised consumer goods industries.

It may be argued that the Planning Commission could have been well advised to curtail the volume of investment to be spent on heavy industries and utilise the same in developing the organised consumer goods industries. Our planners will, therefore, do well to realise this important fact that ultimately the extent of employment depends upon the volume of production, in the mixed structure like ours, where the small industries compete with the large ones and the private enterprises with the public.

Consumer Industries

The prevailing level of unemployment is also in a way attributable to the defective system of education. The "unemployed intellectual" as such constitutes an entirely different kind of surplus. The country has too many lawyers and too many graduates from the art and literature faculties. And, of late, there are instances of unemployed or under-employed engineers, scientists and economists

The unused intellectual is unemployed only because he is unwilling to accept work which he considers beneath his educational level. It is, therefore, a very urgent necessity that our entire educational system is re-appraised and suitable mechanisms evolved, which would make it contribute its due share in easing out the tension of our employment situation. A more calculative and comprehensive approach on the part of the universities, to do something substantial in this matter before it is too late, is urgently indicated

In the sphere of agriculture also, a complete overhaul of the whole structure on the lines of improved methods can create more employment in that sector. Besides, some of the "feeder-type" and "agro-type" industries should be given more importance. It is suggested that conditions should

be created to absorb the rural surplus within the rural sector, till such time as the entire manpower in the urban sector is fully employed

For this, we would be well advised to explore the possibilities of having certain types of rural projects which may require smaller capital investments and would not, thus, be much of a strain on our capital resources

Unless and until alternative employment opportunities actually exist in the urban sector, the transfer of manpower from rural to the urban sector should not be encouraged as that is only likely to aggravate the problem instead of providing a lasting solution

The employment problem will also become easier to handle if it is broken up and analysed by the States, and if State Governments in drawing up their projects for development pay special attention to the employment aspect. The study of employment should also be made from the State angle. This is expected to help in fostering a better understanding of the employment situation and provide a better basis for the solution of the problem. But a lasting solution can come only out of the measures to check the rapidly rising growth of population

Manpower Planning

Thus, the country is confronted simultaneously with two persistent, yet seemingly diverse, manpower problems: the shortage of skilled personnel in the modernised sector and surplus labour in both the modernised and traditional sectors. The strategy of manpower planning is concerned with the two-fold objective of providing skilled personnel and building productive employment for unutilised and underutilised human resources. Paradoxically enough, the shortage of technical personnel is one of the contributing causes of surplus labour force. Thus a strategy of manpower planning must include an attack on surpluses as well as shortages

The manpower planning must take into consideration the following three objectives: realisation of the basic technological shortages and an analysis of the

reasons for such shortages, realisation of the surpluses, both skilled as well as unskilled in various fields, and fixing of the manpower planning targets based on future growth expectations. It will provide a rational picture of the country's human resource problems. The problem is both qualitative as well as quantitative

Cardinal Principle

Once the manpower problems of the country are realised, a strategy must be evolved to combat them effectively. The strategy must take into consideration the following aspects: provision of appropriate incentives, effective implementation of the employment policy; and re-appraisal of the educational system. These three aspects are intertwined.

In providing the appropriate incentives towards the accumulation of human capital and for its most effective utilisation, the cardinal principle to be adhered to is that incentives must correspond to the high priority needs of the country. Incentives must correspond to the needs of modernisation of the agrarian structure and rejuvenation of the programme of industrialisation

The strategy of manpower planning calls for an integrated rather than sectional approach. The programme of human resource development has to be tackled at both the Central and the State levels and there should be complete integration of the machinery for periodic assessment of the human resource problems, determination of priorities in the strategy of human resource development and selection and building of research projects which may be of use in the formulation of the strategy of manpower planning.

The third aspect of the strategy is to renovate the educational pattern of the country. This requires the extensive development of the secondary education and specialised development of higher education to suit the needs of the country.

The most formidable difficulty that comes in the way of working out the manpower strategy is the traditional approach to certain policy decisions. The governmental machinery of the country is very inefficient and hence presents another important barrier. A streamlining of the governmental machinery would be the first prerequisite of success in the strategy of manpower planning.

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What Does Herr Scheel Want?

S. MUKHERJEE

WEST German Deputy Chancellor and Foreign Minister, Herr Walter Scheel, is coming to India on February 13 on a three-day official visit. He has been here before but not in his present capacity. He is also the Chairman of the Free Democratic Party, the junior partner of social Democratic Party in West German coalition cabinet.

Since the SPD-FDP Government came into existence, hopes have been raised. There were talks and gestures that meant "a new look" in West German policy, especially in foreign affairs. Several other developments have also taken place. Scheel's arrival in India, close on the heels of West German financiers' delegation led by Herman J Abs, naturally evokes considerable interest.

Abs delegation kept quiet about India's main complaint—the huge deficit it suffers every year in its trade with West Germany. On the other hand, it hinted that if radical measures are taken to bolster Indian economy, it would vitiate investment climate.

Capital Export

Finally, it suggested some labour intensive areas in which West German investors could be interested and that it would try to "help" India to export.

The aim of the delegation was clear, led as it was by Abs himself who is a great exponent of capital export. His theory is that a massive export of capital now can help cool down the present heated economy of West Germany. In his view, the present quantum of West German

capital abroad—just 25 per cent of the total capital—is not enough. (The US investment abroad is ten times the invested capital within the country)

Hence, Abs was interested to find out where and how West German capital could be exported. In India, West German investment already amounts to about Rs 60 crores, and Abs feels that given "proper" climate, West Germany can make further investment in India.

And now comes Walter Scheel who happens to combine foreign policy with free enterprise. He is a late entrant to politics, joining the FDP only in 1946. But his rise has been rapid; acquiring the chairmanship of the party in January 1968. His business contacts provided the necessary push.

During the Second World War, Scheel had joined Hitler's air force and, when the war ended, he was already a senior lieutenant. In 1946, he began his civilian career as an employee of the Solingen Steel Works. Within five years, he became the manager of the factory. His rise thereafter as business executive was unhindered. An exponent of "free enterprise that alone can assure freedom of the individual", Scheel set up a market research institute—the Intermarket Ltd—in 1953. He also set up Der Neue Betrieb—a study group on socio-economic forms.

His talent in economics was soon rewarded. In 1961, when his party joined a coalition government with the Christian Democratic Union, Scheel was chosen to head the Ministry of Economic Affairs, a position he held till 1966. With Abs as the "uncrowned Minister of Finance",

it was good for Scheel, as long as it lasted.

Meanwhile, a wind of change began to blow in West Germany. The mood of the people changed. They were tired of the policies that successive West German Governments had been following since 1949 when that state came into existence. Progressive and democratic movements within West Germany acquired new dimensions. Shrewd as he is, Scheel sensed the change and took to a radical posture.

Foreign policy attitudes, especially relations as regards the other Germany—the German Democratic Republic—have always been the touchstone of West German Government policy. Scheel took everybody by surprise in the last election by giving the most radical slogans.

Radical Posture

Scheel held a press conference in Munich on February 28, 1969, and there he declared "This obsolete tradition of sole representation must be abandoned. What we want is a treaty under constitutional law with the GDR which naturally is relevant according to international law. We would have to put up with the fact, for instance, that the GDR has an embassy in India."

Just before the elections, on August 4, 1969, in an interview to *Der Spiegel*, he affirmed "We are for complete scrapping of Hallstein Doctrine as a formula of behaviour towards the GDR. In other words, we have no objection whatsoever against the GDR representing itself in relations with the third countries in the world. I think it is completely wrong to discriminate against the GDR in the rest of the world."

The claim of sole representation and its notorious concomitant Hallstein Doctrine (which threatens severance of all relations between West Germany and any third country recognising the GDR) was the natural offshoot of the gunboat diplomacy that all former West German Governments from Adenauer to Kiesinger practised. But in the late sixties, it had lost its effectiveness and after

the new Coalition Government took over, it seemed that this was about to be given up

Willy Brandt, in his maiden speech in Parliament as the new Chancellor, acknowledged the existence of "two states in Germany" and announced his readiness to talk to the other part of Germany. This was something which all previous Governments had refused to do. Brandt signed the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and initiated talks on mutual renunciation of the use of force with the Soviet Union and Poland

Quick Somersault

And yet something else was happening. The man who had mouthed the most radical slogans during the elections, Walter Scheel, took a complete about turn as the Foreign Minister

Within a few days of taking office, he sent out instructions to West German ambassadors stressing "Our attitude towards foreign relations of the GDR will be determined according to the special inner-German relations which have to be regulated in negotiations with East Berlin. Measures of third governments which do not take into account these connections burden the relations with the Federal Republic of Germany." (Associated Press, October 31, 1969)

On November 4, 1969, West German daily *Die Welt* reported that a second official instruction by Scheel has been issued to the ambassadors that directed "Ambassadors are called upon 'to continue to counteract' the efforts of the GDR to obtain recognition." A supplementary note to these instructions reiterated West German claim to sole representation

As if to leave nothing unclear, Scheel told West German Parliament on November 14, 1969, that recognition of the GDR by third states on the basis of international law disturbed an inner-German settlement and thus infringed "our interests." When MPs asked him to explain the difference between "unfriendly act" (which the former Governments

considered the act of recognition of the GDR by a third state) and "burden the relations" (which Scheel made out as the new accent in the attitude towards the GDR), the answer was forthright "If you like, it is a polishing of the language."

And Scheel took this position despite the fact that in a recent opinion poll, almost 72 per cent of the West German population had voted in favour of normalisation of relations with the GDR!

Nevertheless, the GDR took note of the positive aspects of the new West German Government policies and sought to explore the gulf between its words and deeds. It submitted a ten-point draft treaty to be concluded between GDR and the FRG as equal partner which would be binding in international law as a treaty as between two sovereign states. This was a very smart move.

Crucial Point

In all West German Government assertions one crucial point was left beautifully vague—though "two states in Germany" was acknowledged, it was not stated which specific territory was meant by that

Was it the territory the Third German Reich accounted for in 1937 or was it the redefined areas in the former Reich, parts of which had been ceded to Poland, Czechoslovakia and the USSR, and in the rest two sovereign independent states had come into being? Does the new Government accept this reality? This became the main question

The answer was not late to come. In his January 14 Report on the State of the Nation, the Chancellor emphasised that "recognition of the GDR in international law is out of the question", that since the GDR was not a foreign country, there were special relations between the two German states, and that the right of the German people to "self-determination" would not be given up.

The draft treaty proposed by the GDR was rejected and instead a suggestion was made for bilateral treaty on mutual renunciation of the use of force and arrangements to smoothen inter-

German problems.

This was a peculiar outcome. No one had demanded that the German people give up the right to self-determination; all that was asked for was that West Germany must not arrogate to itself the authority to speak for all Germans, especially those who live in other states including the GDR. Secondly, the GDR not being a local self-government under Bonn's overlordship, how could there be regulation and improvement of relations purely on the plank of "inner-German affairs"? It must be an inter-German treaty valid in international law

But this the new government in West Germany is not yet ready to accept and this contradiction is the core of the imbroglio of the German situation. Thus, the inter-German rapprochement as yet has not been realised.

From the day the new coalition Government assumed power in West Germany reflecting the new mood of the people, all democrats and peace-loving people everywhere began hoping that it would no longer act as the pall-bearer of the greatest tragedy of our century that began its death-march from the German soil. That now, at last, an attempt would be made to outlive the past for the sake of a new Germany

Valid Question

The youth and progressive forces in West Germany want their state to be such—a Germany free from the stranglehold of military-industrial complex, a Germany that will live in peace with all its neighbours and give up all territorial ambitions, a Germany that will give up its alliance with the US dirty war in Vietnam, its aid to Israel and Pakistan and come out of the NATO, a Germany that will end its neo-colonial exploitation, and above all, a Germany whose body-politic has been rid of the old poison of fascism and chauvinism.

Indian people too, as people everywhere else, welcomed the

(Continued on page 35)

Foreign Policy in Seventies

K. RANGASWAMY

THE beginning of the new decade has provided an occasion for those at the helm of affairs to draw up their plans for the future, both in the internal as well as external spheres.

India's Foreign Minister, Sri Dinesh Singh, spoke recently on the challenges facing India in the 1970s. Some time earlier, the American Under Secretary of State, Mr Elliot Richardson, and Mr Nobuhiko Ushiba, Vice Foreign Minister of Japan, outlined their respective countries' assessment of the international situation in the current decade and their plans and policies in relation thereto. It will be interesting to analyse the thinking of these leaders, particularly in relation to Southeast Asia and China in which India is deeply interested.

Sri Dinesh Singh concentrated more on the economic question. He said that "the increasing ineffectiveness of and disillusionment with foreign assistance has made the concept of self-reliance more pronounced in recent years, not only in India but in the entire developing community". He said, "The Mood of India is now dictated by the awareness that our goals are capable of being realised through our endeavours and our endeavours alone. From this the conclusion is irresistible that in the 70s our foreign policy will be under the growing impact of this internal awareness and confidence".

Self-reliance, Not Isolation

He hastened to add that self-reliance did not mean self-sufficiency or isolation. He said that it was India's desire to introduce a large element of economic cooperation in the formulation and implementation of its foreign policy. He pointed out that although the use of force has become unproductive in regard to the solution of international disputes, more subtle methods were being employed to pressurise countries in a vulnerable position. This could be countered, Sri Dinesh Singh said, only by fostering economic cooperation on a regional and sub-regional basis. He foresaw that the current decade would be a period of intensive economic cooperation among the developing countries. He elaborated that economic cooperation embraced a much wider field than international trade. He pointed

out that when international relations were dominated by political objectives and motives, the state dominated the field. But in his concept of economic cooperation, not only the state but all other agencies operating within it would be brought into play to establish closer understanding and cooperation among the peoples of the countries.

China An Enigma

Perhaps deliberately, Sri Dinesh Singh refrained from dealing with the political aspect of the problem. Pakistan and China are the two countries whose hostility governed India's policy and programme for over a decade. The important question is what will be India's approach towards these countries. Pakistan's hostility towards India is a predictable feature and there is no doubt it will continue undiminished during the decade. But the more important question is China which is still an enigma for everyone. China's next moves may well depend on what kind of peace, if it is at all possible, will be established in Vietnam. If China is effectively blocked from penetrating south, will it shift its attention towards India and Burma? Although China may be preoccupied with its problems with the Soviet Union for quite some time, the possibility of its giving pinpricks to India cannot be ruled out altogether. A link-up by China with East Pakistan, cutting off the entire north-east region from the rest of India, is an ever present danger, though it might well involve, in due course, East Pakistan's separation from West Pakistan. It is perhaps with this ultimate objective China is encouraging, by its insidious broadcast, the Naxalites in India, hoping presumably to establish physical contacts with them in the north-east region.

Besides India, many other countries in South-east Asia are deeply concerned over China's role in this part of the world and possible Chinese infiltration. They would welcome cooperation with India in the economic field. They are aware of India's limited resources. But even with the limited resources they would like India to initiate moves which would give a positive indication of India's keen interest in the region. Economic cooperation cannot be completely isolated from political understanding and this is what countries of this region would welcome.

Japan's role in the 70s, as revealed by its Vice

This contribution from the senior Indian political commentator has been simultaneously released by the *Foreign News and Features* service which the author has recently started.

Foreign Minister, Mr Ushiba, is indeed staggering. He says that if Japan maintained its present pace of economic growth, it will constitute a bigger economic unit than Germany and France combined by around the middle of the 1970s. "It will then come to occupy the third place in the world with considerable distance between it and the big West European nations." In 1960, Japan's gross national output was about 15 trillion yen and, in 1975, "it will reach about 75 trillion yen, and in that case every move that Japan makes will have an entirely different weight than at the time of 1960" Mr Ushiba translates this economic growth into political terms and says, "To state this in a different way, it will mean that in the 1970s Japan will not be permitted to remain in the position of a guest on the international stage even if it wished to do so, and that it will be placed in a position where it will have no choice but to act as a principal." This is perhaps a diplomatic way of saying that Japan is determined to play an increasingly important role in world affairs.

Mr Ushiba thinks that the United States and the Soviet Union would continue to maintain a "cold peace" instead of a "cold war", and as a consequence of the disappearance of the threat of a major conflict, medium and small nations, hitherto under the influence of the two super powers, would break away to establish their independence. But as small nations cannot ensure their security and economic development, he visualised closer regional cooperation just as Sri Dinesh Singh did, though from a different angle. Mr Ushiba expects multi-polarisation with Japan emerging as one of the centres of attraction. He says that the United States is no longer in a position to play the role of policeman in Asia "in the light of the lessons it learnt in the Vietnam war". And so, "it must be said to be natural for the United States to try to seek the cooperation of Japan which once again has become a leading nation in Asia in the endeavour to establish a stable order in Asia". He says that Japan would cooperate in the economic development of the countries of South-East Asia and mentions the Republic of Korea, Vietnam and Indonesia. India does not figure in his speech at all in any context.

Modest US Outlook

The United States, the biggest power in the world, in the military as well as the economic sense, by contrast is much more modest in its outlook for the coming years. Mr Richardson also referred, as Sri Dinesh Singh did, to "the growth in strength and confidence of the newly independent nations, particularly of Asia". He said, "Asian nations have shown a growing capacity to protect their independence. Despite troubling growing pains, population problems and economic difficulties, their demonstrated nationalist ardour, regardless of their particular ideology or form of government, makes outside domination difficult to accomplish or harder to maintain." After the Vietnam experience, Mr Richardson said the United States "cannot do the job of fighting insurgency for someone else. We

cannot provide the indigenous will and resolution or the toughness and durability that are needed if this kind of warfare is to be waged successfully." While Mr Richardson ruled out American participation in Asian conflicts, he said his country would help with economic and military aid in dealing with insurgency.

As regards China, Mr Ushiba says, "Communist China is a huge unknown factor in Asia." He expects China to have considerable nuclear potential including inter-continental ballistic missiles in the first half of the 1970s. He adds, "Communist China is in fierce competition with both the United States and the Soviet Union. This confrontation relationship will not easily change in the 1970s. As it is a triangular relationship, further tensions in Sino-Soviet relations will inevitably affect the relations of the United States with China and the Soviet Union. In other words, compared with Europe where the two Big Powers are balanced, the relations among the major powers in Asia are all the more complicated." He added, "There is ample possibility of turbulence arising from the relations among the United States, the Soviet Union and China as well as in China itself." By turbulence in China, Mr Ushiba probably implies that there may be internal conflict in China in the event of Mao Tse-tung disappearing from the scene.

What will be Japan's policy towards China? Mr Ushiba says, "For our country the best policy will be to continue to keep the doors and contacts open to Communist China while continuing the hitherto followed policy of separating politics from economics for the time being." He says that Japan must formulate a China policy as part of the country's basic foreign policy. "We should not have the view that it does not matter what happens to our relations with the United States and other important diplomatic questions so long as Japan-China relations become better. The way of Japan-China relations in the future should properly be in the form of peaceful co-existence and contributing to Asian peace, while respecting each other's position fully, in accordance with the principle of mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs." Mr Ushiba has explained Japan's policy in carefully chosen language. What he obviously implies is that Japan will not be a party to containing China, and while maintaining friendly relations with China as well as with the United States and the Soviet Union, Japan must endeavour to increase its influence in South east Asia with its economic power.

Mr Richardson also says that "the long-run improvement in our relations with Communist China is in our own national interest". At the same time he said, presumably in reply to Mr Ushiba, that the United States would not seek to exploit the hostility between the Soviet Union and China. "Ideological differences between two Communist giants are not our affair." The United States, he said, would continue to maintain good relations with all countries irrespective of the ideology they pursued. From what Mr Richardson said it looks as though the United States is in the happy position of having few external problems of its own to tackle.

JUDICIARY AND "DIRECTIVES"

(Continued from page 14)

within the territory of India, that comes under the inclusive definition of Article 12 of the Constitution, on being satisfied that there was an infringement of one or more of the fundamental rights of a citizen

The dissenting judgment of Mr Justice Hidayatullah (as he then was) supports this view. His Lordship illustrated the point with reference to a decision of the Supreme Court wherein Rule 12 of Order XXXV of the Supreme Court Rules was struck down as violative of the fundamental rights of a citizen to approach the Court under Article 32 of the Constitution.

No doubt, it was argued that the judiciary did not function as judiciary in framing the rule but only exercised a legislative function. On this aspect, his Lordship observed that "the judicial decision based on such a rule is not any better and offends the fundamental rights just the same and no less so because it happens to be a judicial order".

His Lordship illustrated further with reference to Articles 20, 21 and 22 of the Constitution to advance the point and held "that judges cannot be said to be entirely out of the reach of the fundamental rights", irrespective of the fact that their orders are capable of correction by way of appeals, revisions and reviews.

He added that "if a judge, without any reason, orders the members of say one political party out of his Court, those so ordered may seek to enforce their fundamental rights" against him and it should make no difference that the order is made while he sits as a judge.

Whether or not a writ will issue from the High Court to a subordinate court came up for consideration before the High Court of Kerala in *Shekriyammada Nalla Koya v Administrator, Union Territory of Laccadives Island*. After analysing the decision in *Naresh v State of Maharashtra* extensively, His Lordship Mr Justice Mathew held that the judicial organ is

also included in the concept of "the state" though not expressly mentioned in Article 12.

In the light of the decisions referred to above, it can be reasonably inferred that the words "the state" take within its ambit the judiciary as well. The question whether a writ will lie against the judiciary for breach of fundamental rights of citizen is not a matter that arises for consideration in this article. All that I have attempted to show is that it may not be safe to assume that judicial organ is not attracted by the definition in Article 12.

Twice Amended

It might perhaps be necessary to illustrate the attitude of the judiciary in regard to the Directives contained in Part IV. The plea of discrimination alleged in the *Champakam Dorairajan's* case was sought to be met by the State of Madras by resort to the provisions of Article 46, which appears in Part IV. The Supreme Court held that Article 46 was of no avail to the State since the directives as such "are not enforceable" by any court.

The immediate result was an amendment of the Constitution inserting Clause (4) to Article 15, thereby impressing the judiciary that in the view of the State, the principles enunciated in Part IV were, so to say, more sacrosanct than the rights guaranteed under Part III, and that in case of a conflict between the two parts, the directives have to prevail.

It is also worthwhile recalling that Article 31 itself was amended twice to give effect to the agrarian and economic reforms contemplated under Article 39 (b).

The attitude of the judiciary has, no doubt, undergone considerable change from 1951 when *Champakam Dorairajan's* case was decided. In *Qureshi v. State of Bihar*, the Supreme Court held that a "harmonious interpretation" ought to be attempted in the event of a conflict between Part III and Part IV. The change in the attitude is evident, for,

seven years earlier, the Supreme Court had held that the Directive Principles "must conform to and run as subsidiary to" the provisions of Part III.

By the time the validity of the Kerala Education Bill had to be considered, the Supreme Court was sufficiently impressed by the force of the Directive Principles and held that every attempt should be made to give effect to both as much as possible, and that the court may not entirely ignore the Directive Principles.

It is also reasonable to think that the Constitution-makers have intended that the principles contained in Part IV should be accommodated as far as possible in construing the fundamental rights in Part III of the Constitution. In interpreting those rights, it was thought, that the court would lay down the principles for determining what is reasonable.

Article 19 is subject only to reasonable restrictions, and the classification under Article 14 is also one of reasonable classification. Would it be improbable to think that the Constitution-makers have intended that a restriction would be unreasonable, if based squarely on the principles laid down in Part IV? It is difficult to think so.

Fundamental Principles

Even from the legislative history of the Directive Principles it is apparent that the Constitution-makers have attached equal importance to the provisions of Part IV. It will be useful to remember that the late B. N. Rao had suggested an amendment to the effect that in case of a conflict between Parts III and IV, Part IV should prevail. However, the amendment proposed could not be accommodated since it came in at a time when the Drafting Committee had made considerable progress in the preparation of the Draft Constitution.

Perhaps, it was also thought unnecessary to make an express provision that the directives

should prevail over the fundamental rights in case of a conflict, since the meaning of Article 37 was plain enough and admitted of no ambiguity. The mandate was to the state, the principles were fundamental in the governance of the country, the words "not enforceable by any court", only meant that the judiciary should not compel the state to perform the "duty" under the "directives" if it had not done so at any point of time

Speaking on the Fourth (Constitution Amendment) Act in the Lok Sabha on March 14, 1955, Jawaharlal Nehru made certain observations which are significant in this context.

"I would like to draw the attention of the House to something that is not adequately stressed either in Parliament or in the country. We stress greatly and argue in courts of law about the fundamental rights. Rightly so, but there is such a thing also as Directive Principles of Constitution. Even at the cost of repeating them, I wish to read them out. Those are, as the Consti-

tution says, fundamental in the governance of the country.

"Now, I shall like the House to consider how you can give effect to these principles if the argument which is often used even if I may say so with all respect, by the Supreme Court is adhered to. You can't. You may say you must accept the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Constitution. They are wiser than we are in interpreting things.

"But, I say, then if that is correct, there is an inherent contradiction in the Constitution between Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles of State Policy. Therefore, again, it is up to this Parliament to remove the contradiction and make Fundamental Rights subserve the Directive Principles of the State Policy."

It is respectfully submitted that the role of Part IV in bringing about a radical change and a reorientation of the society with emphasis on the rights and privileges of the community as a whole

vis-a-vis the individual in the community, cannot be underrated. After all, the principles in Part IV add to and amplify the salutary goals embodied in the preamble to the Constitution. Courts cannot ignore these principles by reason only of the fact that the principles, by themselves, are not enforceable by any court.

If the courts shall not ignore the principles in Part IV, the only and obvious conclusion projects itself out that the courts have to attempt to uphold legislations embodying those principles underlying the need of community as a whole though not of the constituent unit, the individual, because the responsibility of the judiciary is greater and "the duty" in Article 37 is the "duty" of the judiciary as well.

The Directives are not merely meant to be an "instrument of instructions", nor a mechanical enumeration of socialist principles, but represent the indices of modern civilization actuated by the living spirit of a dynamic society.

WHAT DOES HERR SCHEEL WANT? *(Continued from page 31)*

new trends in West German politics and at the same time intensified the movement to secure recognition of the GDR by the Government of India.

But Herr Scheel does not appreciate this feeling in India. He holds a position which is almost a continuation of same foreign policy of the old Governments. He continues to practise double-talks and double standards. His refined diplomacy is rather dangerous since it seeks to cover up many an ugly design.

What language will he use here--the one he used to woo his voters or the one he used in Parliament to pacify the voted? A modern business executive that he is, he certainly is not going to bluntly ask India not to recognise the GDR, as his former Chancellor Kiesinger did. He will try to assuage the feelings of our Foreign Office people and charm

them into appreciate his view points on how to handle the ticklish German issue. He might pick up the links that Abs has established.

But if Scheel is allowed to have his way, it will only add to the damage that our Foreign policy already suffers from. Can we today afford to be further influenced either by suave talks or investment offers? The answer is No.

Flexible Tactics

Just a few days ago, Congo (Brazzaville) has joined the ranks of the Afro-Asian nations which have recognised the GDR notwithstanding West German threat. West Germany could not take any coercive action since such a measure could rebound on itself. Its trade with these countries has not been cut, rather increased in some instances.

In the case of Congo (Brazzaville) it is even more interesting since that state is an associate member of the European Common Market in which West Germany holds a leading position. How come, it is tolerated?

The fact is that in view of the peculiar circumstances, the present West German Government is taking a flexible position. Where it faces firmness, it yields, where it locates weakness, it resorts to old tactics.

Walter Scheel must, therefore, be made to understand our firmness. He has to realise that our people demand the correction of historical anomaly in our relations with the GDR. This will be done whether the West German Government likes it or not.

There is some resistance on the part of our own Foreign Office men but it will be overcome in time. The people are also on the move in our country.

unworkable, and which could work if further concretised.

Some of the solutions which might take shape in the years ahead are discussed below.

To take the political issues first:

1. Police:

No progress can be made unless it is recognised that (i) whoever holds the police portfolio has the toughest assignment in a United Front Ministry (this has *not* been recognised with respect to Sri Jyoti Basu's assignment in the second United Front Ministry).

(ii) Instead of each member-party trying to use the police against others, every party should try to *minimise* police intervention in general, and *eliminate* it in intra-united front inter-party relations

(iii) *Executive* control over the police *cannot* be shared by all member-parties, it must be *concentrated* (as all coercive powers must be, if they are to be effective) in the hands of the Police Minister, for effective action (Thus all-parties' committees to supervise Police and Home Department personnel can only be *consultative* ones, with the Police and Home Department representatives having over-riding *veto* powers)

2 Volunteer Organisations:

(i) These cannot be dispensed with, if police intervention is to be minimised

(ii) They *cannot* be monolithic United Front organisations, since they must be monolithic to be effective, and the United Front is *not* the beginning of a merger to create a single monolithic party

(iii) However, the party-based volunteer organisations must be charged with the responsibility of maintaining order, *not* for creating inter-party disorder (with, or without collusion with the police).

(iv) Public criticism of the volunteers of one member-party by other member parties will obviously make all volunteer organisations heroes of inter-party *disorder*. Each member party must agree to prevent inter-party clashes by internal disciplinary action if necessary, *or* by exercise of the *exclusive* right to make public criticism of those of its volunteer units which it cannot discipline

3. Freedom of Inter-party Public Criticism

This must be recognised at all levels on political issues—not involving inter-party violence (This follows from the recognition that the United Front is *not*, and will not become, a single party) But at the same time, points of political *agreement* should be publicised

4. Responsibility for Ministerial Portfolios

This must be fixed party-wise. All-party responsibility for all portfolios can only produce collective inactivity and inefficiency. (All-party consultative committees can be useful provided the representatives of the party responsible for each portfolio exercise veto powers) It follows from this that the Chief Minister's special powers should be restricted to his position as the Chairman of the cabinet, United Front or legislature party meetings.

To take some key economic issues next

1. Land reforms:

(i) *Both* the tragedy of Naxalbari under the first United Front Ministry *and* the success (disputed by some) in re-distributing nine lakh acres of land by the second United Front Ministry make it clear that, whatever the complications, there can be no go-slow with land-redistribution

(ii) It is equally clear (from the past ten years' experience throughout India) that the implementation of land reforms cannot be left to officials (however well-intentioned) unless the intention is to have them sabotaged by landlords

(iii) Peasants' initiative "from below" to be effective often *has* to take the form of *surprise action*, which is best done on a single-party basis

(iv) However, inter-party clashes in recent months show there is no escape from joint consultation by (locally effective) United-Front parties plus single-party action by the locally best-organised party.

2 Collective Bargains

It is hard to see why clauses requiring *both* employers and workers to ensure uninterrupted production, sales, employment should *not* be inserted in all collective bargains on industry or enterprise basis. This would open the door to *continuous* trade union action to win the urgent demands of workers one after another, while forcing employers to observe agreements as a pre-condition for uninterrupted production, etc

3. Workers' Control and Workers' Participation in Management

With the upsurge in trade union activity in the hitherto unorganised (small-scale and medium-scale) industrial and commercial enterprises, a permanent (statutory) machinery of *workers' control* is the only effective substitute for sporadic gheraos. The aim of workers' control should be to establish collective bargains on the quid pro quo basis mentioned above. Workers' participation in management councils should be introduced in public-sector enterprises, where, with a United Front Government, the chances of avoiding industrial disputes and reaching compromises favourable to workers ought to be greater

4 Trade Union Rivalry

No progress can be made in this matter unless it is recognised that (i) the member-party which is politically strongest in industrial constituencies (judged by election results) must have the Labour portfolio; (ii) if such a party is also paying attention to trade union organisation, it is bound to consolidate its trade union position faster than others, (iii) other member-parties can only hope to strengthen their trade union position by taking advantage of the mistakes in trade union work of the party which controls the Labour Ministry (and not by expecting the Labour Minister to help other member-parties against his own).

Recognition of these principles ought to make it easier to reach agreement on rules for official recognition of trade unions, of multi-party single trade unions, etc.

February 9,



Focus on UP Politics

OPPOSITION IN A DOMINANT PARTY SYSTEM;

Angela Sutherland Burger, Oxford University Press, Bombay; 1969; pp 295, Rs 52

THE volume under review is a study of the "building and maintenance" of the major Opposition parties in Uttar Pradesh, the most populous State within the Indian Union. When the study was undertaken in 1963-1964, the Congress was the dominant party. The Opposition parties posed no serious threat to the supremacy of the Congress. The Opposition parties gained strength but the one-party dominance continued.

Changed Scene

However, the political scene in UP has undergone an astonishing change after the Fourth General Election in 1967. The Congress declined markedly in strength. The Opposition parties, together with the defectors from the Congress, headed the Government for a brief period. The Congress for the first time was pushed into the Opposition benches.

Subsequent developments are too well known. Though the Congress was returned to power with a narrow majority after the mid-term poll in 1969, the Gupta Government is tottering after the split in the party.

It would thus be seen that the Congress has lost its status as the dominant party. The emergence of Bharatiya Kranti Dal as the main Opposition party overshadowing three other Opposition parties—the Jana Sangh, the Samyukta Socialist Party and the Praja Socialist Party—chosen for study in this volume was an unexpected development. In fact the PSP has virtually gone into political oblivion after the mid-term poll. The volume, therefore, has

lost much of its topical interest.

It may be true, as claimed by the author, that the changed political situation has not reduced the value of her study, for, the process of party building and maintenance remains the same. However, the conclusions drawn by the author are out of tune with the realities, with the virtual obliteration of the PSP and decline of the Jana Sangh and the SSP.

These shortcomings apart, the author has, no doubt made a serious attempt to enumerate the factors that have contributed to the emergence of a multi-party Opposition in UP. Popular disenchantment with the Congress was one of the major factors that helped to strengthen the Opposition parties. Why did the Congress become vulnerable after Independence? The answer to this question has been provided after an intensive study of the voting pattern in six constituencies where the Opposition parties had emerged victorious in the 1962 General Election.

The decline of the Congress is due to the fact that after Independence, the party "has had to find a new rationale and new goals." Though the Congress has proclaimed socialism as its goal, "the content of such a doctrine is by no means clear and the practice of the doctrine has yet to be analysed." The shifting of the best brains from the organisation to the administration has deprived the party of effective leadership.

Among the other causes mentioned for the slump in the prestige of the Congress the author observes that the party at the local level "has become identified by

the populace with the specific groups".

The Jana Sangh, on the other hand, mainly relied on the support of those sections which had been deprived of their privileges and status like former talukdars and zamindars. The two Socialist parties derived their strength mainly from those "mobilised at an earlier point in time and the displaced".

The study of the six constituencies by the author reveals a distinctive pattern in each of the constituencies. For instance in Pratapgarh South constituency, the Thakurs rallied to the Jana Sangh standard. The Raja of Pratapgarh was the mainstay of the Jana Sangh. The rivalry between the Brahmmins and the Thakurs were exploited to the fullest extent by the Jana Sangh. Unfortunately for the Congress, the "anti-talukdar appeal has lost their old rallying force".

In the Bhitauli constituency, the Socialist Party identified itself with Kurmis who belong to the backward community. It is interesting to note that the division in the electorate in this constituency was on a talukdar-versus-kisan basis, rather than on a strictly caste basis. In Rudauli constituency religion was the basis of the friction. The Jana Sangh which fielded a Hindu (Bania) candidate, scored over the Congress nominee who was a Muslim, by a narrow margin in the 1962 elections.

Electoral Campaign

It is clear that caste and communal considerations do play a major role in the elections. Every party woos the caste and communal groups to ensure electoral victory. The Jana Sangh as an avowedly communal party appeals to the Hindu sentiments. It draws and derives sustenance from communalism. It also seeks the support of the former talukdars and the small Hindu shopkeepers.

Viewed from a historical perspective, the decline of the Congress is solely due to the fact that it failed to convert itself into a vehicle of social and economic transformation. True, it had taken certain measures like the abolition

of the zamindari and talukdari systems which strike at the traditional order but, by and large, it was reluctant to introduce radical reforms which would bring about a social change

Instead, the Congress leaders relied mainly on political manoeuvrings and factional politics to keep themselves in power. Thus, the field was left clear for the Rightist parties like the Jana Sangh which since 1951 had made

impressive gains. This aspect has not been sufficiently stressed by the author

The Praja Socialist Party by converting itself into a liberal party has lost its appeal. The Socialist Party is facing disintegration because of its failure to assess the mood of the electorate in its proper perspective and its excessive reliance on "verbal militancy" than any concrete action based on its

ideology

The author, no doubt, has made a painstaking study of the complex factors that have contributed to the emergence of the Opposition parties in Uttar Pradesh. Though the changing political scene has not been studied in depth, the volume will be useful to students of contemporary politics

N. Rajan

ILO STUDY: WORKERS IN 1969

(Continued from page 26)

improve substantially in 1969. In Uruguay, which earlier suffered chronic inflation and where prices had more than doubled in 1967 and again in 1968, the strong inflationary pressure was eased; the increase between July 1968 and March 1969 was only about six per cent. Argentina had a price rise of less than ten per cent for the first time in more than ten years. Indonesia also appeared to have dampened inflation, which had prevailed since the end of 1961. Prices in Indonesia had more than doubled in 1967 and again in 1968, but the rise from January to March 1969 was of only six per cent, after which prices started to fall, so that their level during the second half of 1969 was finally only one per cent above the level of the corresponding period of 1968.

Difficulties from Devaluation

In several industrialised countries, monetary difficulties which were expressed by devaluation of the French franc and revaluation of the Deutschmark had the effect of accelerating the rise in consumer prices. Measures taken by France, Netherlands and United States of America did not prevent the level from rising six, seven and five per cent respectively in comparison with that of one year before—a noticeable acceleration over previous years. As an example of this acceleration, it may be noted that from February to March 1969, consumer prices rose in the United States of America by 0.8 per cent, which was the biggest monthly increase for 19 years. In Japan, the price increase remained between five and six per cent per year.

Wage data were available for only about 30 countries. They were mostly limited to manufacturing industries and to the first part of the year.

Average money wages increased in all these countries except Ceylon, where minimum daily wage rates have not changed since December 1967. In general, the rate of annual increase of hourly wages was higher than that of weekly earnings. Apart from some countries such as Sweden, average wage increased faster for women than for men, but they were still 20 to 40 per cent below the average wages

for men except in France where the difference was only 16 per cent. (This does not necessarily mean that women earn less than men for work of equal equality, because the average wages of a group are influenced by the group's composition—by profession, by age, etc.)

Money wages in the manufacturing industries rose by ten per cent or more during the past year in the following ten countries: Brazil, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Japan, Norway, Spain and Yugoslavia. There was a rise of between five and ten per cent in 18 countries, including Bulgaria, Canada, Finland, Federal Republic of Germany, Mexico, Netherlands, Puerto Rico, United Kingdom and United States of America. The rise was between two and five per cent in Hungary and Poland. Polish wages have increased by an average of four per cent a year since 1960. In France, money wages have risen by one or two per cent each quarter since 1967, except for June 1968 when a level of more than ten per cent above that of March 1968 was reached.

Faster growth of prices since the end of 1968 absorbed part of the increase in money wages, particularly during the last months of 1969. However, real wages (or money wages corrected for change in consumer prices) in the manufacturing industries have risen in some 25 countries for which figures are available. The increase exceeded ten per cent in Japan. It was between five and ten per cent in nine countries (Australia, Chile, Denmark, Finland, Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Ireland, Spain and Yugoslavia). The increase ranged from three to five per cent in Hungary, Israel, Italy, Norway and Sweden. Real wages of manufacturing workers rose by less than three per cent during the past year in ten countries, including Canada, France, Netherlands, New Zealand, United Kingdom and United States of America. In Austria, the increase in money wages was very irregular, but purchasing power grew by an average of 2.4 per cent during the first nine months of 1969. In Brazil (at Sao Paulo), on the other hand, consumer prices rose by some two per cent more than money wages between May 1968 and May 1969.

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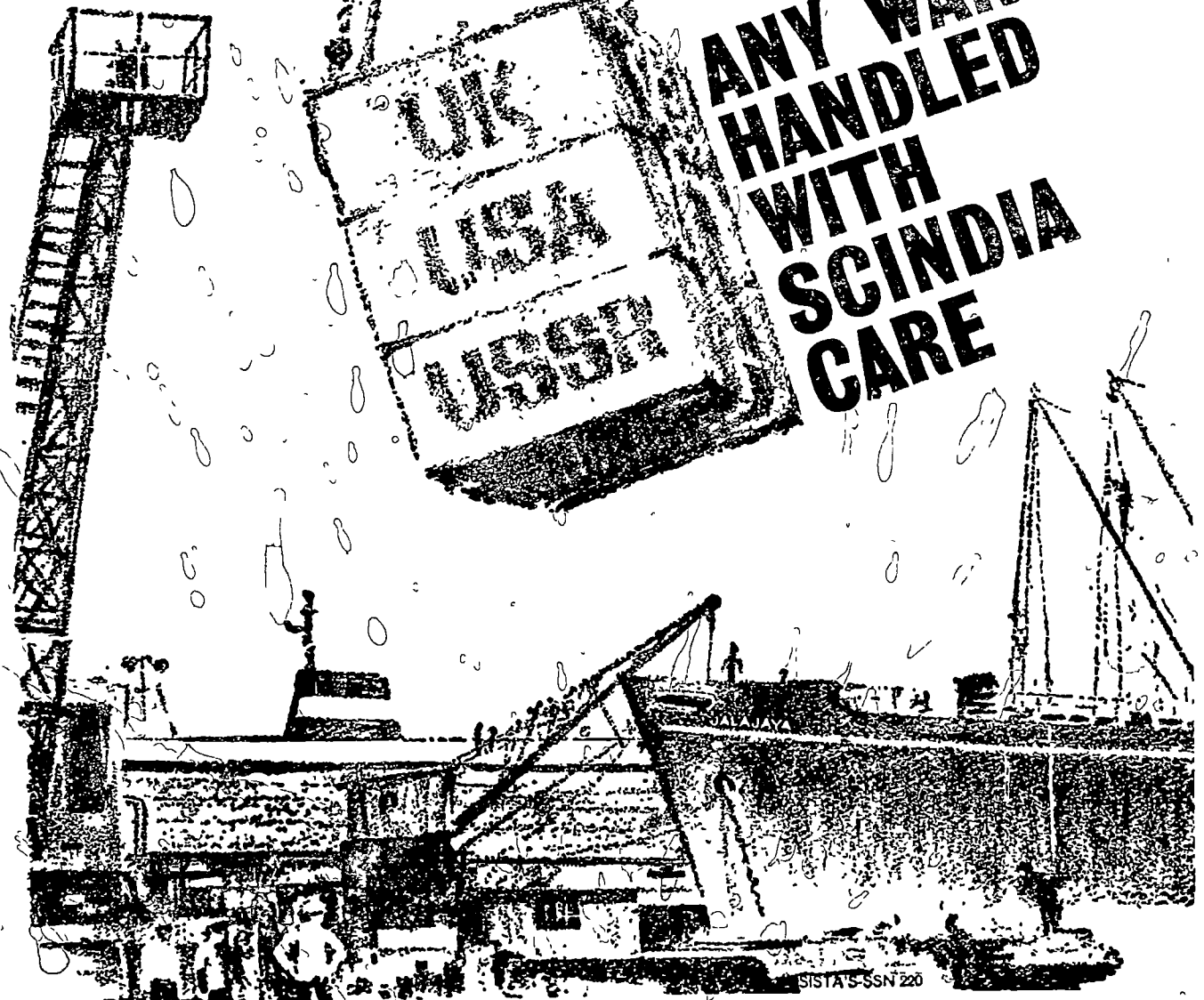
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Parliament and Judiciary

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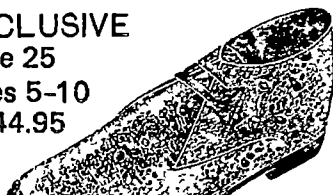
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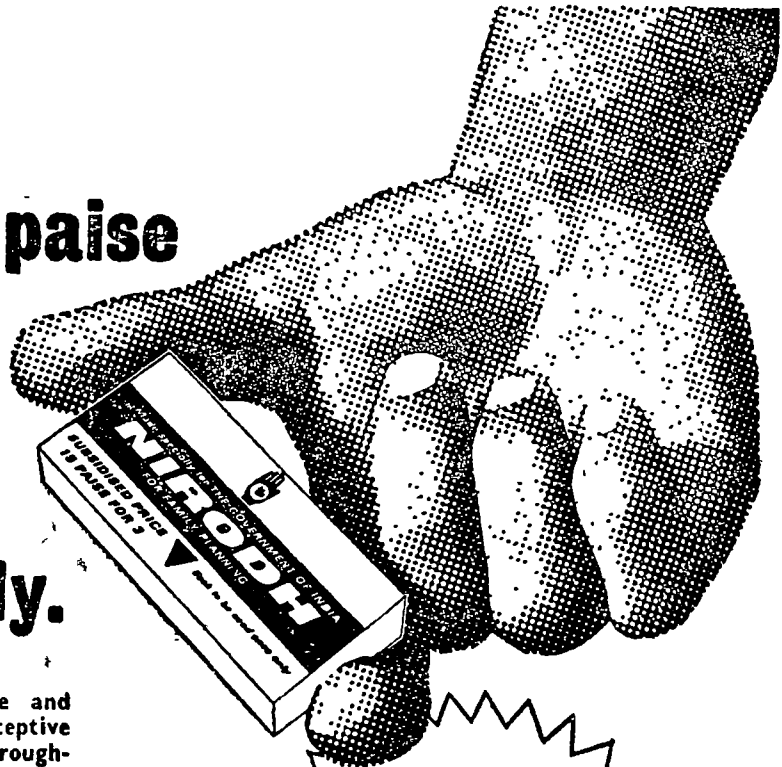
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Parliament and Judiciary

NEITHER the Supreme Court judgement striking down the Bank Nationalisation Act, nor the half-hearted Ordinance issued thereafter was unexpected. The general tendency of the Supreme Court over the years has been to interpret the Constitution in favour of the status quo rather than in favour of change, however ardently public opinion might desire such change. The exception was the law relating to the abolition of zamindaris with which the courts did not interfere. While the Supreme Court has in the past been reluctant to interfere even where the highest privilege of the citizen, freedom of movement and association, was involved, it has not treated Parliament's measures affecting private property in the same light.

So far as the Ordinance is concerned, its provisions reflect the inability of the Union Government, despite the vastly changed political atmosphere in which it is functioning, to get over the inhibitions and fears developed over the years. While as a measure of "re-nationalization" of the 14 biggest banks it is no doubt welcome, its provisions clearly amount to an attempt to appease the vested interests which have been fighting against all progressive legislation. There is little justification for the heavily increased compensation amounts, which are to be given to the banking companies concerned to enable them to continue to play with public funds in the name of doing "other business".

The verdict and the Ordinance together have set the tone for the political and economic debates that are bound to dominate the Budget session of Parliament which has just begun. While even Big Business newspapers have been compelled to acknowledge the massive popular support all over the country for the take-over of the banks and the utilisation of the funds thereby made available for public purposes, Right reaction has already mounted a campaign against what it calls attempts to make out that there is a "confrontation" between the Supreme Court and Parliament.

The truth is that the Supreme Court's power of interpretation of the Constitution has quite often come in the way of action in the economic sphere based on the people's will. The public have a right to wonder whether Jawaharlal Nehru's observation that "within limits, no judge and no Supreme Court will be allowed to constitute themselves into a third chamber", has not become quite relevant today, and

whether Parliament, as the supreme voice and instrument of the people, should not take the steps necessary to ensure that the popular will is carried out in full.

There is no use pretending that Parliament's supremacy is not under direct challenge today. The position taken by the Supreme Court on property rights and the question of compensation has the effect of making it virtually impossible for large-scale acquisition of private property for public purposes to take place. Gandhiji had the foresight to see the development of such a situation, hence his firm rejection of the compensation concept as an attempt to rob Peter to pay Paul. This, however, is precisely what the latest Ordinance seeks to do, as a result of the Union Government's present incapacity to resist the pressure of the lobbies of the vested interests within and outside it.

There is no reason for refusing to apply the logic that obtained in the case of zamindaris to the industrial and banking spheres. The conclusion is inescapable from what has happened that the background of the majority of judges is such that the views of

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EDITOR Nikhil Chakravartty

Views expressed in the articles are those of the author
and not necessarily of this journal

the affluent minority rather than the mood and aspirations of the people at large, the majority of them poor and exploited, find reflection in its decisions. There is no use running away from this basic fact for fear of offending the susceptibilities of courts or judges or others.

Parliament has the duty of taking a fresh look at the Constitution in the light of the many findings of the Supreme Court on issues relating to economic changes and in the light of legislative requirements if the radical structural changes in the economy promised frequently are to be met. Nehru's declaration that "where the future of the community is concerned, no judiciary must come in the way", was at no time so entirely valid and relevant as it is today. The judges of the Supreme Court may be presumed to act according to the best lights avail-

able to them, but the consequences of its decisions cannot be overlooked. Parliament has the responsibility of recognizing that the only conceivable alternative to peaceful transition to economic democracy is violent revolution, which the majority in the country do not at the moment desire. If necessary changes are immediately effected in the Constitution and the Government exercises its prerogative of selection of judges for the highest court of the land bearing in mind the criteria appropriate to the new and developing situation in the country, parliamentary democracy will inspire more and more faith; if these are not done but every major progressive economic measure is permitted to be blocked and nullified, this faith will be eroded. Such erosion will obviously have disastrous consequences.



Socialists : Problems and Prospects

GIVEN the circumstances in which the many political parties in this country took birth and have grown, it was inevitable that the split in the Congress should have had so profound an impact on all of them. Immediately after the split and especially during the winter session of Parliament, it looked as if the long-awaited polarisation of forces was taking place at last and quite swiftly, in a manner not entirely anticipated.

Subsequently, however, the process appears to have slowed down and doubts and reservations on the part of the leaders of the different parties have surfaced; this has been clearer in the case of some of the Leftist parties than in respect of those of the Right.

Considering recent developments, particularly those in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, it would not be unfair to say that the Congress split has caused the maximum confusion in the two Socialist parties, the SSP and the PSP, and to a lesser extent among the Marxist Communists. It has been easier for the CPI to adjust itself to the new situation because it had seen earlier than the others the potentiality of the Left-inclined

elements in the Congress, though in terms of numbers at the higher levels these were neither impressive nor altogether effective.

Those who are hesitant to recognise the Congress split as one step towards polarisation, however small, cannot be blamed. It is quite true that there are elements in the camp of Smt Indira Gandhi who cannot be treated as individuals dedicated to socialist aims or even to the limited radicalism that the Prime Minister has now come to represent in the eyes of large numbers of people.

But either on this ground or on any other to refuse to distinguish between the Syndicate and the Congress, or to justify overtures to the former merely for the reason that it is not at the moment in power, appears to be a posture resulting from either unreasoning prejudice or crass opportunism.

It appears logical to conclude that in the prevailing conditions the task of the Leftist parties is collectively to take advantage of the socialist postures and promises of the ruling party at the Centre and to apply pressure on it constantly and relentlessly to fulfil its promises and to enlarge its

economic programme to bring it even closer to those of the Leftist parties.

The game of "toppling" is no doubt quite exciting, but in the present situation, it is barren because the Leftist parties are in no position to provide a viable and better alternative. It must be noted that those who harp on toppling the Indira Gandhi Government, far from honestly searching for such a Leftist or at least Left-leaning alternative, seek to achieve their negative objective by playing second fiddle to the known parties of vested interests and communal reaction.

In other words, "anti-Congressism", instead of being temporary tactics to deal with a particular situation, has become an overriding obsession. The tool has become the master in the case of some of our most prominent Socialists, so much so that they appear ready to instal a powerful Rightist Government at the Centre if they can, merely in order to remove Smt Gandhi from her present position.

What is sought to be imposed upon sections of the Left is a kind of inverted personality cult. Ideology and economic and social aims have inevitably been lost

sight of in the circumstances.

This is not to say that we now have a completely trustworthy socialist government at the Centre which must be preserved at all costs; in fact, the ruling party at the Centre, although it has got rid of its most reactionary dead-weight, is still a party being subjected to contrary pulls and pressures. One has only to remember that the same Government nationalised the banks and also approved licences for new projects of big business houses whose reputation has been quite murky and to encourage whom goes directly against the commitment to reduce the power of monopolies in the country.

The point is that the leadership of the ruling Congress is able to see that it will be wiped out if it does not take steps that can create confidence among the masses about its capacity to bring about radical economic changes in the promised direction. At the same time, its background renders it difficult for it to resist pressures from the very vested interests it is pledged to render impotent. This is clearly a situation which provides unlimited opportunities for the Leftist parties to play their historic role of decisively changing the whole direction of governmental policies to the advantage of the common people.

Toppling the Indira Gandhi Government does not guarantee the emergence of a more progressive government in its place. It also holds out the prospect of emergence of a regime obliged by its very nature to serve the urban and rural vested interests and prevent radical measures where they will hurt these entrenched interests.

On the other hand, there is more than a fair chance that the Leftist parties can bring some gains to the people by applying pressure on the present Government to introduce more and more radical economic measures aimed at removing disparities, preventing the growth of monopoly, freeing the common people from the stranglehold of traders and middlemen and profiteers, ensuring equitable distribution of essential commodities at reasonable prices,

paving the way for the steady elimination of unemployment and under-employment and generally laying the foundation for the kind of social and economic order that the Directive Principles of State Policy in our Constitution envisage for this country.

It is in this context then that the developments in the SSP and the PSP have to be viewed. There are healthy signs that in both parties there has been a great deal of heart-searching and an attempt to face facts squarely instead of taking refuge in outworn slogans and prejudices.

At the same time, in both the parties there are influential elements who are unable to grow out of the narrow shells they have built around themselves, and some who are guided by opportunism and personal ties with vested interests of one kind or another rather than by the requirements of the situation in terms of the declared aims and policies of their parties. Such elements today appear to be weaker in the PSP, judging by recent developments.

At Sonapur, the sharp differences in approach between two sections of the SSP came plainly to the surface—although the inner party tussle had started much earlier, during the winter session of Parliament. The ferocity with which the Raj Narain faction fought for a stand that would directly or at least indirectly permit alliance with the Syndicate and the Jana Sangh in UP was quite revealing.

The battle over the question of alliance in Bihar was significant because the SSP is quite strong in that State and the Raj Narain and Madhu Limaye factions thought that if the Bihar SSP could be persuaded to establish a so-called non-Congress alliance it would be easy for them to pursue their objectives elsewhere. The majority decision of the SSP legislators in that State against such a move, and Sri Tewari's withdrawal from the shady arrangement, have given the Raj Narain and Madhu Limaye factions a big jolt, but after the bitter debate at Sonapur they should have expected it. Despite this a section in the SSP

leadership has come in the way of a Leftist alliance emerging in that State.

That Sri Limaye and Sri Raj Narain do not have identical objectives in view and that the struggle for supremacy between the two has not ended, was brought out by Sri Limaye's statement last week equating the conduct of Sri Tewari in Bihar in withdrawing from the Right-dominated SVD, and of Sri Jaiswal in UP in identifying himself totally with Sri C B Gupta's game, and warning the party rank and file in the country against "the would-be warlords in the party".

That Sri Limaye should have tarred both Sri Tewari and Sri Jaiswal with the same brush of "arbitrariness", although they were doing diametrically opposite things in relation to alliance with known reactionary parties, only shows the extent of confusion the dominant section of the SSP leadership has created for itself by its blind and unthinking pursuit of what it likes to imagine is "anti-Congressism".

Anti-Congressism which had relevance when the common aim was to disturb the status quo sharply and break the monopoly of power which was used to strengthen big business houses and the rural rich, is now sought to be used to assist the very forces which were responsible for preserving the status quo, and it is hardly surprising that many in the SSP have seen through the game and are fighting for a more rational alternative.

It should have been obvious to any honest socialist that in Bihar the natural allies are the parties of the Left which together are a formidable force. To talk of "programmatic basis" for alliance in the case of such parties whose aims do not differ greatly would be understandable, but talk of such a basis for a tie-up with Sri Gupta or the Jana Sangh or the discredited Syndicate bosses of Bihar smacks of opportunism rather than of socialism. The way the last-minute attempts by Sri Joshi to establish a Leftist front were thwarted does little credit to the vociferous advocates of unsullied socialism.

It has begun to look as if Sri Raj Narain would not be averse to forcing a split in the SSP if it is only by this means that he and his followers can pursue their own course in UP. Equally, he and his friends seem bent upon keeping a section of the SSP in Bihar tied to the apron-strings of the Rightist parties.

Whether, despite his antipathy to Sri Raj Narain, Sri Limaye will continue to pursue this self-stultifying line remains to be seen. The latter's performance during the winter session of Parliament was not very creditable for a committed socialist: some of the statements he made during that period were calculated to confuse issues and confound party rank and file.

Then, and even at Sonapur and after, a systematic attempt was made to create the impression that Sri S M Joshi is "pro-Indira Gandhi" and make out that the Socialist leader was party to a new personality cult, while the truth is that Sri Joshi sought to differentiate between the triple axis of the Right and the ruling party at the Centre. He insisted that his party should not join hands with the Rightists merely for toppling the Government, he wanted in fact that while not being a party to the toppling programme of the Right, the SSP should decide the question of support to the Government on the merits of each issue.

It was clear from Sri Joshi's utterances that he believed the Leftist parties together could put pressure on the Centre sufficiently to keep it to its promises and to compel it to move ahead. It is idle to pretend that this approach is devoid of logic.

Even as Sri Joshi recognized the patent fact that the Congress split, Sri Morarji Desai's ouster and bank nationalisation had released new and dynamic forces which it was the historic task of the socialist forces in the country to channelise for the early achievement of their cherished goals, the PSP leadership at the Baroda session made a determined bid to pull the party out of the rut into which it had fallen in order to enable it to take advantage of the new situa-

tion in the country.

The PSP's "dialogue" resolution which ruled out any truck with the Syndicate, Jana Sangh and Swatantra by emphasising "unequivocal" commitment to the four basic principles of nationalism, democracy, secularism and socialism, made it clear that the party will seek alliances of a very different kind from the one which Sri Raj Narain and Sri Limaye have been specialising in.

But the PSP too has its no-changers who cannot give up their ancient prejudices or comprehend the new reality, Sri Kamath is outstanding among these. It is significant that despite the Baroda resolution Sri Kamath rushed to Bihar to influence the State PSP in a different direction.

The essence of what is happening within both the SSP and the PSP is that large numbers of members have begun to realize that in the new situation, full of potentialities, a barren negative approach will not do. The difference is that while in the SSP the dominant leadership is as yet reluctant to recognize the validity of rank and file dissatisfaction, in the PSP the dominant leadership has been able to a great extent to respond to the mood of the membership and the needs of the situation, whatever the calculations of individuals which led to this position.

However, at the moment what happens in the SSP happens to be of somewhat greater significance because it has a larger mass base than the PSP. The stress on mass movements at Baroda was a tacit admission of this fact. The tragedy is that instead of consolidating its mass base and giving it a positive direction in terms of mass movements on basic economic and social issues, the dominant leadership of the SSP is content to play at power politics in Parliament and the legislatures while repeating militant slogans to keep the rank and file in leash.

The Gaya programme of the SSP has become a forgotten factor while, in fact, it should have been vigorously revived in order to forge unity with other Leftist forces on the basis of mass move-

ments on a national scale. On the other hand, the attempt is to work out transient equations with parties which do not believe in mass movements but are adepts at chess games at the top.

There is still no evidence that leaders like Sri Limaye and Sri Fernandes, who do not approve of Sri Raj Narain, have given up their habit of dragging the party off at a tangent at critical moments in national life, as they did over the Kutch and Kacchathivu affairs. Their own confusion would not matter very much but for the fact that it is reflected in the SSP's decision-making.

They are as much preoccupied with equations within Parliament and the legislatures as Sri Raj Narain is in UP, and they have not as yet given any clear indication, as the PSP leadership has now done, of demarcating themselves from the Rightist combination. In fact, they do not have to imitate the PSP, they have only to recognise that events are gradually proving Sri Joshi right and them wrong.

They must also recognise the fact that if they are serious either about mass movements, or even about getting their programme implemented honestly, they have to choose their company accordingly: they cannot talk of mobilising the masses to break the hold of the affluent minority and in the same breath, of alliances with the defenders of the same minority, without seriously impairing their credibility.

The argument that the Syndicate is to be preferred and the Congress is to be shunned merely because the former has been thrown out of office and the latter is in power at the Centre, is pretty thin. The Central Government, as Sri Joshi in SSP and Sri Dwivedi in the PSP have said, must be supported or opposed on the basis of its performance on each issue basic to national life; this is the position to which the SSP leadership as a whole must come unambiguously if the Party is to serve its socialist purpose positively. The demarcation from the Syndicate, Sangh and Swatantra must be unequivocal if its socialist professions are to be taken seriously.

Where the Leftist parties can come to power through combinations in which they together will be the dominant and decisive factors, it has to be remembered that power is not the end. The developments in West Bengal and Kerala have given some idea of the problems involved in running a Left-led coalition smoothly and efficiently; the lessons have to be learnt and sights adjusted accordingly.

If even in the case of united fronts committed to utilizing power for the fulfilment of an agreed programme, practical functioning and implementation of promises is beset with so many difficulties, it is not difficult to see the absurdity of talking about an alliance on the basis of a programme with parties which do not believe in those programmes.

The Leftist parties should undoubtedly assume power jointly wherever the opportunity offers itself. In our context, progressive measures have to be achieved through both parliamentary methods and mass movements. The two have to be intertwined if the people are to prevail against the lobbies that have been operating effectively so far.

It is much more important for the Leftist parties, including the SSP and the PSP, to pay increasing attention to mass mobilisation through a common platform based on specific demands. There is no need to prove that massive pressure from the people can lead to positive, dynamic action being forced on the Government. The pressure of big money can only be countered and defeated by the power of the masses. It is not as if this elementary truth is not known to the leaders or rank and file members of the Leftist parties including SSP and PSP.

So far as the SSP is concerned, the ideas most dominant at Gaya soon after Dr Lohia's death need to be revived, minus the inhibiting, obstructive legacy of anti-communism. As for the PSP, its record over the years has not been such as to enable the people to believe straightaway that it means action on the basis of the Baroda formulations,

its future lies not so much in making use of its present strength in Bihar or in Parliament but in joining hands with other Leftists in organising mass movements. It has of course to streamline its organisation for this purpose.

Once these two parties are clear about their aims and methods, it should not be difficult for them to forge unity in action with the Communists and others who believe in socialist goal and are prepared to work hard for it.

To run away from the masses

and hope to bring about radical changes either by parliamentary eloquence or through the numbers game, is to pursue a suicidal course. The parliamentary programme has to be dovetailed into a programme of channelising the current popular upsurge, to do otherwise may bring temporary advantage to individuals but will certainly harm the cause of the common people.

C N Chitta Ranjan

February 16

DIARY OF THIRTEEN CRUCIAL DAYS

High Drama in Uttar Pradesh

N. RAJAN

THE battle for power in Uttar Pradesh between the Syndicate and the Indira Congress had all the elements of high drama. It had its moments of suspense, of anxiety, and of thrills.

The Syndicate considered UP to be its citadel and its leader Sri C.B. Gupta was determined to cling to power though his group was in a minority in the Assembly. The Indira Congress was equally determined to wrest power from Sri Gupta. Both the parties had high stakes in UP for, in the ultimate analysis, this state provides the key to power at the Centre.

In the bitter struggle for power, the BKD with a strength of 96 members in the Assembly, held the balance. Its leader, Sri Charan Singh, was aware of his pivotal position and strength. Unpredictable and elusive, he succeeded in snatching the political initiative from both the contending parties.

Sri Charan Singh initiated his moves with consummate skill. He snapped his ties with the new Congress at a crucial moment and brought about the resignation of Sri Gupta. He joined hands with the Indira Congress once again when it was almost taken for granted that he would head the BKD Syndicate coalition

Government. The Syndicate was stunned, so also was the Jana Sangh.

The eventful drama of thirteen days beginning from February 2 would make interesting reading even when only the highlights are put together for a rapid glance through. Events changed rapidly, confounding the political pundits both in Lucknow and Delhi. These thirteen days virtually shook Lucknow.

February 2: A joint meeting of the BKD State Executive and the Legislature Party meets in Lucknow and decides to seek clarification from the new Congress on "all issues regarding the formation of future coalition government" after C. B. Gupta is toppled.

Charan Singh tells pressmen that although he had given an assurance to the Prime Minister to abide by her decision on the leadership issue, his party has not approved of his commitment. In fact his party has held that he had "exceeded his authority" by such a commitment.

While reiterating that his party was committed to topple C. B. Gupta's Ministry, Charan Singh throws a dark hint that the BKD Executive and Legislature Party will take a final decision on February 9 about its future course of action.

February 3 The Prime Minister tells the Congress Legislature Party that "no coalition government could be formed under pressure". She stresses the need to reach an agreement on a common programme for an effective functioning of the coalition government.

At the meeting, H N Bahuguna announces that the strength of the Legislature Party has increased to 125. The meeting also decides to entrust Kamlapati Tripathi with the task of conducting negotiations with other parties to topple the Gupta Ministry.

February 4: The reaction to the Prime Minister's remarks that "no coalition government could be formed under pressure" is spontaneous in the Syndicate camp.

Ram Subhag Singh makes an air-dash from Delhi to Lucknow to dissuade Charan Singh from joining hands with the Indira Congress. Rao Birendra Singh wants to convince Charan Singh that the Prime Minister would let him down as she had let down Haryana on Chandigarh issue. Charan Singh refuses to meet both the leaders.

Immediately after words, Charan Singh, in an informal chat with the pressmen, discloses that H.N. Bahuguna and Uma Shankar Dixit had met him in the morning and explained to him that the Prime Minister's remarks were not directed against him.

Meanwhile, Tripathi, the leader of the Congress Legislature Party, sends a letter to Speaker informing him that his party associated itself with the no-confidence motion given notice of by Secretary of the BKD Legislature Party.

Another motion of no-confidence, signed by 95 BKD MLAs, is sent to the Speaker. The stage is, thus, set for co-ordinated action to oust the Gupta Ministry.

February 5 The Gupta group circulates a report that C.B. Gupta will initiate a surprise move on the eve of the Budget Session. It is hinted that Gupta will resign before February 11 if the tussle for leadership between the BKD and the Indira Congress persists.

The pro-Gupta lobby in the

BKD is active. Eight of its MLAs issue a statement condemning the Prime Minister's remarks. The statement amounts to an insult to their leader Charan Singh, they say.

Banarsi Das, General Secretary of the State Syndicate Congress, in a statement doubts if the new Congress is sincere in its profession of entering into a coalition with the BKD. He has a dig at the ruling Congress for its failure to settle the leadership issue.

Bahuguna and Tripathi issue a statement appealing to all the socialists outside the Congress to cooperate with the Congress to "give a programme-oriented direction to politics to create a socialist and democratic society".

February 6: The Gupta group is active, spreading the story that the Indira Congress is out to create conditions for the imposition of President's rule, to be followed by mid-term poll.

The BKD leaders, Jai Ram Verma and S. Swaroop, call on Kamlapati Tripathi to discuss the latest situation. Later Charan Singh and two of his lieutenants go to Tripathi's house for important talks. Chaturbhuj Sharma and J.P. Rawat, former Ministers, are also present.

February 7. Riyasat Hussain and Hukum Singh Parihar, the PSP and SSP leaders, appeal to all the pro-socialists in the legislature to evolve a common strategy to fight "reactionary and communal elements".

February 8 On the eve of Congress President Jagjivan Ram's arrival here, Mohanlal Gautam, President of the State Syndicate Congress, says in a statement that he knows from his personal knowledge that the Chief Ministership has been conceded to Charan Singh by Tripathi on the advice of the Prime Minister who wants to topple "the Gupta government at all cost".

Gautam, however, adds that Charan Singh would not be allowed to continue for long as the Chief Minister. "The Prime Minister would prefer President's rule to Gupta's or Singh's rule for she would not like a mid-term poll at least for the Lok Sabha under the Chief Ministership of either Gupta or Tripathi."

This statement is again interpreted as a part of the Syndicate strategy to break Charan Singh away from the ruling Congress camp.

There are loose talks in the new Congress camp also that some leaders like Bahuguna have veered round to the view that a mid-term poll is inevitable.

February 9. Charan Singh throws a bombshell by politely refusing to meet Jagjivan Babu for political talks. In his letter to Jagjivan Ram at about 8 PM, Charan Singh throws a broad hint that he is searching for new allies to avoid another mid-term poll.

He once again states that he stands committed to topple the Gupta Ministry but, at the same time, he will not hesitate to join hands with other parties to avoid a mid-term poll. A copy of the letter is sent to the Governor.

Jagjivan Ram, talking to pressmen, does not commit himself on the leadership issue but is confident that the Gupta Ministry will be toppled.

Political observers see in Charan Singh's letter an ominous indication of BKD-Syndicate coalition. But the Indira Congress does not take an alarmist view.

Tripathi announces late in the night that he would meet Charan Singh the next day to remove any possible misunderstanding. Jagjivan Ram also sends a reply to Charan Singh's letter.

Earlier in the evening the Syndicate legislators meet in Moti Mahal and authorise C.B. Gupta to take whatever action he thinks fit to prevent the Indira Congress from dislodging the Gupta Ministry.

Kumharam Arya, the BKD leader who is in Lucknow, meets Charan Singh and also the Syndicate leaders. Arya says that the Prime Minister in her talks with him did not give any assurance regarding the leadership issue.

Sucheta Kripalani, T.N. Singh as well as Acharya Kripalani are in Lucknow to mobilise support for C.B. Gupta.

February 10. Ram Subhag Singh again rushes to Lucknow.

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Court's Verdict : Some Features

SHYAMLA PAPPU

READING the recent judgement of the Supreme Court in the bank nationalisation case, one is at once struck by the fact that the law that was settled for a number of years and was repeatedly reaffirmed, came to be reviewed and reconsidered in this case like the Golaknath's case in 1967 which reversed a judgement of 1951.

The celebrated Gopalan's case decided as early as 1950 has at last been over-ruled. This decision though criticised by eminent jurists all over the world, held the field for two decades, and it had so transpired that it had now been over-ruled in a case concerning property rights.

In that case, when a detenu challenged the legality of his detention on the ground that the law providing for his detention was unreasonable in character, the Supreme Court held that the fundamental freedoms guaranteed under Articles 19, 21, 22 and 31 were mutually exclusive.

In other words, the court pronounced that a person detained under a valid law of detention could not complain that his freedom guaranteed under Article 19(1) was infringed. Nor could he agitate that the law providing for his detention was unreasonable. All that a court would ask of a detenu was whether there was a law behind his detention, and if the answer was in the affirmative, that would be the end of the enquiry.

This position has been held to be erroneous by the present judgement. R.C. Cooper, a shareholder and director of some of the nationalised banks, challenged the banks nationalisation Act on

the ground that the action of the state offended Articles 14, 19 and 31 of the Constitution.

Shah J, speaking for himself and nine other colleagues, gave the majority judgement and said "In our judgement the assumption in the A K Gopalan's case cannot be accepted as correct. A citizen may claim in an appropriate case that the law authorising acquisition of property imposes fetters upon his right to hold property which are not reasonable restrictions in the interests of the general public."

While it is heartening that the error committed in Gopalan's case has been rectified, and those deprived of personal liberty will have enlarged rights, it is distressing to note that all progressive legislations enacted in furtherance of a public purpose and necessary for the social and economic development of the nation, will have to pass the test of reasonableness also. If the court for some reason comes to the conclusion that such a law is unreasonable, it will have to be struck down.

I am reminded at this stage of the lucid analysis of Mahajan J, who spoke of public purpose thus, while dealing with the Bihar Land Reforms Act: "Legislature is the best judge of what is good for the community, by whose suffrage it comes into existence and it is not possible for this court to say that there was no purpose behind the acquisition contemplated by the impugned statute. The phrase 'public purpose' has to be construed according to the spirit of times in which a particular legislation is enacted, and so construed, the acquisition of the estates has to be held to have been made for

a public purpose."

The learned judge made this observation in the background of Article 39 which speaks of the Directive Principles and enacts that the state shall in particular direct its policy towards securing that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve common good, and that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment.

I say this because I am of the view that the guarantees available in respect of personal freedom ought not to be extended to property rights. Man is born free and individual freedom, both physical and mental, is the birthright of a human being in civilized society. Property rights being artificially created by man, can always be restricted and regulated if the larger interests of the nation require that it be so done.

The framers of our Constitution committed an obvious error in dealing with the right of property as part of the fundamental freedoms. This situation can now be rectified only by a proper constitutional amendment and a redefinition of the word "property" in the Constitution in the context of present day developments.

Let it not for a moment be understood that I ask for a total negation of the right to property. I only say a limited and qualified right to property can be created by suitable legislation. As to how this may be done, is something which ought not to engage our attention in this article.

Another decision which came to be over-ruled in effect, without saying so in specific terms, is the decision in Shantilal Mangaldas's case which laid down the law relating to compensation as it stood after the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution.

This amendment was necessitated because in 1954, in Bela Banerjee's case, the Supreme Court had pronounced that compensation payable for any acquisition had to be "just equivalent" or "full indemnification"

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of the property acquired. This meant that abolition of zamindari could never be possible.

The Fourth Amendment came in 1955 in the wake of this situation and Article 31(2) was expressly amended to read. "No such law shall be called in question in any court on the ground that the compensation provided by that law is not adequate"

This provision was interpreted in the aforesaid Shantilal Mangaldas's case, and Shah J., speaking for the court, said that the case of Bela Banerjee "raised more problems than it solved" because the court did not indicate the meaning of "just equivalent".

Shah J., in this case, says, first, that the adequacy of compensation fixed by the legislature or awarded according to principles specified by the legislature is not justiciable, and secondly, if the amount of compensation is fixed, it cannot be challenged apart from a plea of abuse of legislative power because otherwise it would be a challenge to the adequacy of compensation.

Shah J further said that the principles of compensation could not be challenged on the plea that what was awarded as a result of the application of those principles was not just or fair compensation

It may be relevant to note here that the court could always interfere when the compensation was illusory because that would be a case of no compensation at all, and further, when the principles adopted were irrelevant to the determination of compensation

For instance, if property worth one lakh rupees is compensated with Rs 100, it would obviously be illusory. By "illusory" is meant what is patently shocking—something that is deceptive on the face of it, without anything more.

Quite a contrary view has been expressed by Shah J in the majority judgement new pronounced in the bank nationalisation case. While holding that Section 6 was invalid as it impaired the constitutional guarantee for payment of compensation. Shah J says "Even if it be assumed that the aggregate value of the different components will be equal to the

value of the undertaking of the named banks as a going concern, the principles specified, in our judgement, do not give a true recompense to the banks for the loss of the undertaking."

The court thus held that the compensation clause had to be struck down as it failed to provide recompense for some of the components which are essential to the undertaking such as good-

will of the business—an intangible but essential element constituting the undertaking—and the value of the unexpired period of the leases governing the undertaking in question.

Mention may be made at this stage of the dissenting judgement of Justice A.N Ray who has held that such an enquiry into the

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Land Reforms: Who Will Implement?

MYTHILY SIVARAMAN

THE "free" press of India, ever on the prowl for a chance to malign people's movements, found a juicy one in the CPI (M)'s decision to implement land legislation in Kerala without waiting for the State to move in.

For weeks on end, the dailies screamed "land grab, land grab", "unabashed subversion of democracy" and the like. Correspondents went profusely over the fate of the landlords, small and big. The Solomonish editors pontificated day after day on the evils of the people "taking the law into their hands," while the "due process of law" was ignored.

Periodic Hysterics

There were warnings that ours was the only democracy in Asia sandwiched between dictatorships, red and white. Let us preserve democracy by rounding up all these anti-social elements running amuck in the rice fields.

Long accustomed to the periodic hysterics of our press, their latest performance did not send my blood pressure rocketing. Not once had they used the expression "land grab" in the past two decades to describe the land illegally held by landlords although some of these very papers had even editorially acknowledged mala fide transfers and illegal possessions. No, the viciousness of the press no longer bothered me; I had learnt to co-exist with it.

What did bother me, and I am sure it bothered several others as well, was the attitude of some Socialist and Communist parties. Even those who encouraged occupation of waste lands by the landless in other parts of the country, seemed shocked at Kerala. The attempt to implement

the law, using the "prospective beneficiary," to borrow an expression from the Bombay resolution, was decried as an attempt to plunge the nation in "anarchy and bloodshed". The abuse "land grab" was not used exclusively by the press.

No wonder the Indian revolution seems a far cry—where else can you find a Communist leader praising a minister representing a landlord party for his "able handling" of the police portfolio, exactly at a time when the peasantry and the landless are fighting a pitched battle with landed interests! One might legitimately disagree with the manner or conduct of the struggle, but to praise the instrument of oppression!

In making an issue out of the attitude of Left parties, it is not intended to provoke polemics which can be safely left to political platforms. The intention is simply to stimulate thinking on how to implement land legislation effectively.

National Consensus

Apart from some Leftists and Socialists, many of the uncommitted, generally sympathetic to workers' struggles, also sound skeptic of the need for direct action by workers to implement the law. Their belief is that given a sound legislation and a well-intentioned government (like the United Fronts?) there is no need for the people "to take the law into their own hands".

It is incredible that anyone with the least awareness of Indian experience, could be so naive. In the past several months, every other forum has been used to discuss the failure of land reforms, from the Prime Minister to the

village level worker, all have been harping on this theme. Never before have we witnessed such a national consensus on the failure of the reforms.

In fact, it has become fashionable and a passport to radicalism, especially for Congressmen, to dramatise the failure. With the publication of the Home Ministry's report, the Leftists task of providing that reforms have failed, has become easier. They just have to quote the Government to the Government.

Amazingly, there has been little discussion on why legislation has failed. This was glaring in the Bombay resolution which made much of the past failures and rephrased some old goals without even hinting what was to be the new guarantee against failure.

Unless one considers the Prime Minister's word of honour as the guarantee—some of us have disturbing memories. Perhaps the only guarantee is the special tribunals to be set up for speedy disposal of land litigation! May be by force of habit another principle was mentioned in the resolution—but of this later.

All this only by way of calling for more discussion on why the reforms have failed in the past and how they could be implemented.

It is still treason to mention in a class room, for instance, the Marxist principle that you cannot use the bourgeois state apparatus to implement legislation against its interests, although it is quite respectable to say the same thing quoting bourgeois economists like Gunnar Myrdal or his lesser breeds in the Western world.

Almost every book on land reforms written by western authors hint—not all are as blunt as Ladejnsky, the Ford Foundation consultant, who, speaking of land reforms in Thanjavur said, "Officials behave as if the act was not meant to be enforced"—that the Indian bureaucracy is incapable of carrying through land reforms. Representing the middle and the upper classes its sympathies lie with the middle and rich peasants.

The thinking of the bureaucracy, unconvinced of the wisdom

of the reforms and worried by possible adverse effects on production, was well described by Doreen Warriner "...officials showed no understanding of the original purpose of these laws. To their way of thinking it was obvious that large land owners had to consider their families, perhaps—a tentative suggestion—they were more efficient than small farmers? Was there ceiling legislation in England?" (*Land Reform in Principle and Practice*)

The Panel on Land Reforms of the Planning Commission found safer words, "Revenue officials were unconsciously hostile in attitude"

Even when officials come from lower classes, the social context in which they have to function, the rigidly hierarchical class society reinforced by caste distinctions, renders them ineffective. The basic fallacy in the land reform concept is that it left it to the existing power structure to implement it. Do we know of a class having taken action against itself excepting peripherally and as a tactic to strengthen its position in the long run?

Real Association

Plain commonsense suggests that the effective realisation of a measure depends on the extent to which the would-be beneficiaries are associated with it. Perhaps, "associated" smacks too much of the Government of India documents and the Five Year Plans. We don't want people sitting in village committees as decorative pieces or to impress foreign dignitaries with our democracy.

Real association means the involvement of the people at every phase of the law until they ensure its total compliance. Even the Bombay resolution calls for the "association of the prospective beneficiaries with the implementation of land reforms". No new significance could, however, be attached to it for the Congress has a grand old tradition of the "peoples' participation" rhetoric.

The peoples' involvement in implementation of a law has also been recommended by "respectable" economists purely from the functional perspective that in

India, notorious for the absence of written records, it is only the local residents who would know the actual details in any given situation

This becomes clearer when we consider specific legislation. Preparation of tenancy records, the most rudimentary piece of administrative work has failed on a massive scale in India. Legislation to register tenancies was enacted piously by several legislatures while several thousand oral leases and cooked-up leases still go undetected

Brilliant Apology

Appalled by this, Ladejnsky recommended that in each village a committee should be set up consisting of two tenant farmers, one part-owner-part-tenant farmer and one land-lord to assist the officials in preparing tenancy records. His explanation was "In making this recommendation we have in mind the experience of Shahabad district where the preparation of the record by the official agency proved to be a fiasco. What the officials don't know about 'who is who' in the village—who rents whose land and how much—the committee would surely know."

With all the talk of people's involvement, the Indian legislators have not so far considered it necessary, in the face of total failure of tenancy record laws, to associate the tenants with its implementation even to the extent recommended by Ladejnsky. In fact, the Madras Government came up with a brilliant apology that many tenants prefer to keep their leases oral! And that "the Government do not consider it practicable to resort to compulsion of execution of written leased deeds"

It is the same story with the land ceiling acts. We have waited long enough for voluntary surrender of surplus, all we got was a pittance and wagon loads of litigation in the courts. Yet, there is a tremendous reluctance to get it the only way we could. No one knows better than the local peasantry whether a person registered as a land owner does in fact exist or not. Politically aware and militantly organised

small peasants and agricultural labourers are the only guarantee against evasions of law

The States of West Bengal and Tamil Nadu are good illustrations. In West Bengal, it is estimated that in the past nine months about three lakh acres of land in the illegal possession of landlords were taken by the landless.

Agricultural labour decided not to wait any longer for the landlords, the officials and the courts, to determine the size of the surplus land. The surplus of a landlord was no secret to his labourers and they occupied it. The law was implemented but the press and a lot of respectable people called it "violation of law and order".

Paper Proposition

In Tamil Nadu, all that the Government got was about 20,000 acres of surplus out of which 10,000 acres is locked up in court injunctions. The landless are still hoping that the Government would one day offer them the surplus land. The law has remained a "paper proposition". Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu tells us, the law and order situation is one of the best in the nation

The Bombay radicals declared that all intermediaries should go by the end of 1970. Fine, but who will see that they do go—the Prime Minister, the Chief Ministers, revenue officials, the tehsildar, the Panchayat President or better still, the police?

Given this reality, the only way to implement a law that would adversely effect the dominant economic interests is to make the "prospective beneficiaries" primarily responsible for it. Officials could be used to assist the people's committees with clerical work, and the courts to sanctify a legal situation. To trust anything more to them is suicidal

To make a law without providing specifically for a popular implementation machinery only means a built-in escape clause. The Land Reform Act adopted in Kerala recently is no exception to this. It is not surprising,

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Laboured Justification

C. P. MENON

MYTHILI Sivaraman is a bit late in her impassioned championing of the CPM's abortive "agrarian revolution" in Kerala. For, even before she could come to its defence, the CPM leadership had quietly abandoned the much-advertised struggle and switched on to far more "revolutionary actions" like indefinite fasts by chosen MLAs

However, she has posed a vital question who will implement land reforms in India? She answers it. The chief burden of the implementation of land reforms, according to her, lies on the "prospective beneficiaries", that is the tenants and landless agricultural workers. Few people will have quarrel over this as a general theoretical proposition. But the real question is how and in what form should this be implemented? This is where Mythili Sivaraman has gone off at a tangent.

Decisive Change

She assumes that state power will be opposed to the implementation of land reforms. This is true of most of the States in India but not of all States. As early as 1957, when the first Communist Government came to power in Kerala, the possibility of the working class and toiling peasants, using State power to effect some progressive changes in the social structure and giving immediate reliefs to the working masses, became real.

The emergence of the Leftist-led United Front Governments in Kerala and West Bengal in 1967, marked a decisive change in the relationship of the work-

ing class and toiling peasantry towards the State apparatus. With the political direction of state power, however limited, mainly in the hands of the Left, a situation has arisen, when state power could be utilized (of course, within the constraints of the present Constitution) to benefit the working people. Progressive legislations could be enacted and implemented

Essential Question

The Kerala Land Reforms Act, which is the most progressive of its kind in India, is the direct result of this change. In her anxiety to defend the CPM's exercise in ultraism in Kerala, Mythili Sivaraman ignores this basic fact. As a result, she treats the present United Front Government in Kerala headed by Sri C. Achutha Menon, on the same footing of the Congress and Syndicate Governments or the DMK Government.

The essential question about people's participation in the context of a progressive United Front Government is whether it should be in opposition to the Government or complementary to its efforts in implementing popular legislations like land reforms. The CPM's tactics in Kerala is one of undiluted oppositions. Mythili Sivaraman appears to warmly endorse it in the name of direct action of "prospective beneficiaries" against dominant economic interests.

But was the CPM's much-vaunted call in Kerala to the tenants and Kudikidappukars (homestead tenants) to implement the Land Reforms Act, an honest attempt to lead the fight against

the dominant economic interests? Unfortunately, it was a political stunt. The politically conscious working peasantry of Kerala saw through it immediately. The CPM leadership was more keen in using the Land Act as a weapon to oust the Achutha Menon Government rather than in its implementation. No wonder, it misfired and ended in a pitiable whimper.

The CPM leadership gave the call to implement the Act on two false premises. They proclaimed that the Centre would not give assent to this progressive measure. Even if it did, the "landlord-vested-interests-dominated" Achutha Menon Ministry will not implement it. Hence, they called upon the peasants to seize lands in excess of the ceiling and homestead tenants to fence off the 10 cents of land granted to them by the Act, and pluck coconuts to establish their right of possession.

But the CPM calculations went wrong. The Centre gave assent to the Bill, without much delay. The Achutha Menon Government immediately announced that all sections of the Act would come into force from January 1, 1970. Former CPM Minister, Gauri Amma, who had piloted the Bill, had provided that some of its provisions need be implemented within six months. But the Achutha Menon Ministry preferred not to take resort to this "revolutionary" escape clauses.

In spite of the CPM's high-pressure propaganda, the bulk of the peasants and agricultural workers believe in the bona fides of the Achutha Menon Government. They wanted to implement the Act with the active assistance of the Government, and not by creating difficulties in the way of implementation. This was the basic reason why the CPM's call collapsed ignominiously.

Intellectuals like Mythili Sivaraman should calmly and dispassionately ask themselves the question why the CPM's "direct action" call failed to take off, in spite of the Party's strong mass base in Kerala. Except for some isolated actions for about a week, the so-called campaign to

implement land reforms in a "people's way" failed.

The failure was glaringly conspicuous in the areas of the State where the CPM claims its biggest influence—the former Malabar area. Why did not the peasants and landless agricultural workers of Palghat, Khozhikode and Cannanore districts seize all excess land, and fence off all the homestead lands? The CPM leadership has yet to answer this very damaging question.

In the rice-rich Palghat district, the CPM is the most powerful party. In this district, more than any other in Kerala, there are more landlords who have land in excess of the ceiling of 15-20 acres fixed in the new Act. Similarly, the district has a large population of agricultural workers and tenants who live on the lands of other people. This was an ideal district where the CPM could have implemented its programme very effectively. But, strangely, it is in Palghat district that the CPM was most lukewarm about its so-called revolution.

The inference is clear. In spite of its big boasts, the CPM leaders did not want to alienate their rich peasant friends and supporters by seizing their excess land or fencing off the tenant homesteads. In fact, a good section of the CPM members and workers came from rich peasant families and have much to lose by such direct action. This was one of the main reasons of the total failure of the agitation in the strongholds of the CPM.

Mythily Sivaraman is angry with people who criticise the CPM's attempts in certain areas to implement the land reform in its own way. But a large bulk of peasants and agricultural workers were not convinced of the CPM way of seizing land and distributing them.

Popular Committee

The Government had announced that surplus lands would be distributed to landless agricultural workers and other rural poor on the basis of the advice of local popular committees, in which all political parties in the State would be represented. Half of

the land would be reserved for Harijans. A certain portion was set aside for landless people from other districts where there was not enough land to distribute.

But the CPM insisted on seizing land and distributing it to those who seized it, that is to their supporters. This was extremely unjust and disrupted the unity of the working peasants. It was the victory of might over right. The experience of the meagre land distribution conducted by the CPM while in office had also added to the fears of the ordinary people. Most of such land was given to CPM supporters.

Should political discrimination be exercised in land distribution? Should a band of people be allowed to grab the land which should by right go to the weaker sections? These are some of the

questions posed by the extremely sectarian action of the CPM.

Instead of striving to unite the working peasants and agricultural workers in the implementation of land reforms, the CPM tried to create a situation where the rural poor fought against each other, and the vested interests could have the last laugh. Fortunately, the people were not misled by the CPM tactics. So, to hide their failure, the party leadership tried to divert the attention of the party masses to another sectarian struggle in the name of the transport workers.

Mythily Sivaraman quotes Lenin to give theoretical respectability to the CPM debacle. Even if this particular struggle failed, "it would still be valuable as a training for them in mass struggles". A very costly way of educating the masses!

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Survey of Industrial Licensing Policy

M. D. NALAPAT

AN old joke about Government functioning is that whenever it is the but of serious criticism, it promptly appoints a committee to go into the charges. After many months, when the committee submits its report, there is a brief teacup storm and the whole affair is forgotten until the next outburst of criticism. This is what has happened to our licensing "policy." Serious allegations have been made against it, but the defects continue. Which is a pity; because licensing is at the core of our industrial strategy, and weaknesses here show themselves over the entire industrial economy.

Birlas Chief Beneficiary

The Industrial Licensing Policy Inquiry Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Licensing Inquiry Committee) has done well in revealing several shadows on our licensing system as it operates today. It is the presence of these shadows that has brought licensing into disrepute, that has spawned monopoly in several sectors and that has corrupted a substantial and important section of our politicians.

With the new political situation in which the progressive forces can make an impact as Government policy the Licensing Inquiry Report has become very significant. The defects have been mercilessly exposed once again and they demand eradication.

In what follows I shall not dwell too much on the sometime complex methodology followed by the Committee in its analysis of licensing procedures. I shall concentrate on those aspects of the Report which should be of interest to all right-minded persons, and shall then proceed to examine the recommendations of the Committee.

I shall begin by reproducing a list of licensed industries (Table I). The list is divided into three sections, A, B and C. In A the product licensed is listed, in B the percentage of the total capacity licensed which went to large business houses (a 'large industrial house' being defined as those houses which have each assets exceeding five crore rupees). In C are listed the principal beneficiaries of the licenses granted.

This is not an exhaustive list. For that, one should consult the Report itself (pp 53-63 of the *Main Report*), but certain facts are clearly revealed.

(1) The small sector has been brushed aside even in sectors where large units do not enjoy economies of scale. For instance, radios are a product

which can easily be produced in the small sector and yet the Government allowed the large (chiefly international) producers to pre-empt the bulk of the licensed capacity. Not merely that, in several cases it actually allowed the large producers to go beyond their licensed capacities. Phillips was producing 54 per cent over the licensed capacity, Murphy 38 per cent over, and Mulchandani (foreign company) 68 per cent over its licensed capacity. No objection was taken by the Government to this. It is interesting to note that the vast majority of the rejected applications for a licence came from the small industrial houses.

(2) Birlas appear to have been the chief beneficiary of our licensing policy. I have deliberately italicised the "Birla" name in Table I to highlight its ubiquitous character.

(3) The chief beneficiaries of licensing have been not merely big industrial houses, but the very biggest of these houses. Birla, Tata, these are recurring names in the beneficiaries column. I do not see any

TABLE I

A	B (per cent)	C
Polyester and Acrylic fibre	100	Tata, ICI, Mafatlal, <i>Birla</i> , JK, Sarabhai
Industrial gases	70	Not mentioned
Aluminium re-rolled products	Over 80	<i>Birla</i>
Trucks	89	<i>Birla</i> , Walchand
Soda Ash	81	<i>Birla</i> , Tata
Aluminium Ingots	—	<i>Birla</i> , Indalco
Aluminium Foil	—	<i>Birla</i> , Indalco, Indian Foil
Asbestos	80	<i>Birla</i>
Calcium Carbide	100	<i>Birla</i> , Sarabhai, Sri Ram, S P Jain
Newsprint	75	<i>Birla</i> , Sahu Jain, Thapars
Tyres (automobile)	—	Dunlop, Firestone, Ceat, Good Year, <i>Birla</i> , Podar
Rayon grade plup	84	<i>Birla</i> , Sahu Jain
Caustic soda	—	No concentration seen
Rubber footwear	43	S P Jain
Bear	50	Chowgule, Dyer Meakin
Nylon (fibre and yarn)	50	<i>Birla</i> , Podar, JK, Modi, Nirlon
Electric Motors	—	Kirloskar
Switchgear	—	<i>Birla</i>
Glycerine	77	Not mentioned
Pesticides	—	Tata, ICI
Fertilizers	—	Rallis, Parry, Shri Ram
Radio receivers	47	<i>Birla</i> , Tata, GEC, Phillips, Mulchandani, Gramophone Co
Wood pulp	66	<i>Birla</i> , Thapar, Bird-Heilgers, Chinai

house in that list which is even reasonably small—all are large houses or companies

I shall now proceed to reveal a few specific instances of partiality shown by the licensing authorities to particular producers or group of producers

(a) *Razor Blades* In 1964, one firm, H L. Malhotra and Sons, controlled 84 per cent of the output. This industry is such that the product can be efficiently produced in the small sector. There would, therefore, have been excellent reason for diversifying through licensing the productive units. Instead, during the period of review by the Committee, H L. Malhotra and Sons obtained about 86 per cent of the new capacity licensed. Several applications for a licence were rejected on frivolous grounds.

(b) *Polyester Fibre*: ICI controls all the installed capacity for Polyester fibre. "Though the firm was given its first licence in May 1961, this was implemented only in March 1965. It was given a Letter of Intent for substantial expansion in September 1964, that is, *before implementing the first licence*" (italics mine). There have been no less than twenty-three rejections for polyester fibre, most of which were to companies which could easily have made this product. Not merely this, but one applicant (JK) offered to make the fibre without any foreign collaboration.

(c) *Asbestos Cement*: Birlas controlled 60 per cent of the capacity for this during 1956-66. Between 1960 and 1962, about 30 applications were received, mostly from small houses. These were all rejected and a decision was made by the Government that all new capacity was to be granted to the existing producers, namely, Birlas, Bangur, Sahu Jain and Asbestos Cement.

(d) *Rubber Footwear*: Bata are the giants in this sector, and while several applicants (some belonging to small houses) were not granted licenses, Bata increased its production by over 50 per cent during 1956-66 unauthorisedly. No action was taken against the company for this unauthorised expansion.

I have listed only four sectors. The same shabby story is repeated in several others. The licensing authorities have shown surprising partiality to some parties but never to the "small man in the sector". And one of the objectives of licensing was to prevent the growth of monopoly and the securing of disproportionate power by some business houses over the others!

I shall now set down certain of the procedural defects in licensing pinpointed by the Committee.

(A) *Inadequate scrutiny*: The Report shows that "scrutiny of applications leaves much to be desired". For example, the application form does not provide for information regarding the estimated product cost, while information on capital cost and foreign exchange needed is "vague". The capital goods scrutiny is so imperfect that the applicant often returns with requests for substantial expansion *most of which are granted*.

Furthermore, "in contrast to the tendency to waive or ignore objections in the case of influential and large house applicants, the attitude of the licensing authorities is far from helpful in the case of smaller companies". The Report has given several examples of how small houses were harassed and

refused licences while the large ones got all that they had asked for and more (*Main Report*, pp 69-70)

(B) *Misuse of Letter of Intent*: The main purpose of the Letter of Intent was to enable the applicant to negotiate with foreign parties so that concrete proposals may be brought before the licensing authorities for consideration. In several instances (notably where the Birlas were concerned), the parties pleaded for a letter of intent and subsequently practically demanded a licence on the grounds that negotiations with the foreign companies were at a stage where a withdrawal would prove "embarrassing" and would allegedly destroy the entire favourable industrial climate in the country! For some reason, the licensing authorities repeatedly fell for this trick.

(C) *Reversal of Decisions*: There are instances where applicants who have been rejected a licence, have subsequently got one because of reconsideration by the licensing authorities under pressure from the applicants themselves or from Government departments. For instance, an application from Universal General Agencies (a Mandelia concern. Mandelia is, incidentally, a key Birla Man) was at first turned down and subsequently approved. Also, an application from Union Carbide was recommended for rejection by the Licensing Committee in view of the large capacity already under the control of the company. A plea by a Government Department that "only" 40 per cent (1) of the capacity was controlled by the firm led to the reversal of the rejection.

Other glaring defects mentioned in the Report include the fact that foreign collaboration agreements were often allowed when these were beneficial to the larger houses and not otherwise, and that firms were often granted a licence on the grounds of some specific and declared advantage which later failed to materialise.

(D) *Non-implementation*: It was found that several licences which were issued, were never implemented. For example, out of 417 licences issued during 1966, 140 were not implemented. The total number of industrial licences issued during the period 1956 to 1966 was 10,016. Out of these 6,181 were implemented, 672 were partially implemented, 1,739 surrendered and revoked, and 1,276 or nearly 13 per cent were simply not implemented. It is interesting to note that non-implementation was most common among the larger houses. Birlas, for instance, did not implement 166 of their licences, Tatas 47, Soorajmull Nagarmull 39, and JK 35. Fully five out of the 20 larger houses (JK, Mafatlal, Sahu Jain, Killick, Soorajmull Nagarmull) implemented less than half of the licences issued to them.

An important reason for this non-implementation was the desire to pre-empt the existing capacity. If licences were issued for the full capacity, no new licences would be issued. In several cases, large houses successfully pre-empted in this manner a substantial part of the licensed capacity (*Main Report*, pp 77-95).

Repetitive collaborations were great evil in our policy as Table II shows.

I quote from the Report: "We find that 56 collaborations were approved in the field of textile finish-

ing, printing and dyeing, 23 for cranes, 18 for electric motors and capacitors. In spite of the fact that Government had already entered into collaboration agreements with good firms of repute for the production of heavy earth-moving equipment, a private firm (Hindustan Motors—Birlas) was permitted to enter into a collaboration (with General Motors) for the same product. Moreover, a higher than normal rate of royalty (6.25 per cent) was permitted with a base of calculation more favourable than usual. The collaboration of one firm (Asiatic Oxygen in 1963 with Westinghouse USA for the production of welding electrodes entailed royalty payment of 5 per cent on gross sales and 6 per cent on exports, while the collaboration by another firm (Power Cables Ltd) with the same foreign firm had entailed only 3 per cent on gross sales and 4 per cent on exports in the same year" (*Main Report*, pp 125-129)

Repetitive Foreign Collaboration

Different terms for the same type of collaboration were fairly common

Another great evil was the entering into collaboration with foreign firms with inessential items like lipsticks, sanitary ware, footwear, safety pins, hair clippers, etc. Firms frequently entered into collaboration agreements with foreign companies not because the technical knowhow was not there (at least this is what I hope—I'm sure we can produce at least safety pins by ourselves!), but to cash in on the foreign name. The wonder is that all this was permitted by the Government without any demur.

The report reveals that the major financial institutions and particularly the Government ones have helped the larger houses enormously. The Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (ICICI) gave 50 per cent of its total assistance to the 73 large houses, the Industrial Finance Corporation of India (IFCI) provided 44 per cent and the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) 41 per cent. The IDBI gave 34 per cent of its total assistance to the 20 largest houses. The ICICI gave 28 per cent of its total assistance and the IFCI gave 18 per cent to these 20 houses.

The State Financial Corporations (SFCs) and the State Industrial Development Corporations (SIDCs) gave 19 and 17 per cent of their total assistance respectively to large companies. It is instructive to note that both these agencies were set up specifically to aid the small and medium entrepreneurs.

The State Bank of India gave over 80 per cent of its term financing assistance to the large sector, while the Life Insurance Corporation and the Unit Trust of India gave over 80 per cent and 94 per cent, respec-

tively, to the large sector. As regards the public sector banking institutions, the large sector got almost three-fourths of the total given to private enterprise. In several ways, such as provision of foreign exchange and sharing in project cost, the large sector was the chief beneficiary.

The chief recommendations of the committee can be summarised as follows

(A) *Licensing must continue:* It is undoubted that efficiently and impartially used, a system of licences can do much good to the economy. If, however, the authorities do not feel bound by any priorities and are susceptible to various pressures, the continuation of the licensing system in its present form will do more harm than good to the economy. Licensing has not prevented monopoly, it has encouraged it, it has not evened out income inequalities but has further aggravated them, it has not proved beneficial to the masses, it has proved harmful to them. Before agreeing to a continuation of the system, I feel that steps should be taken to minimise the dangers of an arbitrary and corrupt authority.

In this connection, I would suggest that the licensing authorities be made independent of Government. Another idea would be to have a Licensing Advisory Board, which would be aided by the necessary technical staff and which would be independent of Government control. The Board could advise the Government on licensing and if the Government did not in specific instances take its advice, it must explain clearly the reasons for it to Parliament.

(B) *The joint sector:* This essentially means that in those companies where the state directly or through its institutions provides substantial assistance, the state should have a dominant or at least active role in management.

Efficient State Management

Again, this recommendation is good only if the state does not manage inefficiently. I would suggest that the state utilise its equity and loan capital holdings to see that professional rather than business people predominate in the joint sector companies. While the state ought not to directly intervene in management, it can be represented on the Boards of companies to see that the companies act always with a view to social priorities. This presupposes that the men the state selects will be honest and efficient, a combination seldom met with in practice.

(C) *The core sector:* This sector "would include all the industries whose production processes enter into a large number of industries, those which are potentially capable of production for Defence requirements, and those whose development is crucial for the over all economic growth of the country". It is this sector which should be subjected "to the full rigours of industrial licensing".

The Report says that it is in respect of this sector only that licensing should play a positive role. Its role in the other sectors would chiefly be to (a) promote dispersal of ownership of industry, and (b) keep out capital from inessential industries. The *middle sector*, that is, the sector intermediate

TABLE II
REPETITIVE COLLABORATION (1956-1965)

Frequency	No of product	No of collaborations
2—5 times	282	802
6—10 times	60	431
11—15 times	14	185
16 and above	7	165

the core sector and the banned or reserved sector, should be released substantially from the licensing procedures. The one restriction should be that this, being an easy sector, should be banned to the larger industrial houses and to foreign companies, who should divert their energies to the essential and "difficult" sectors.

(D) *The Monopolies Commission:* The Committee recommends the setting up of a Monopolies Commission to prevent the growth of a large industrial house when that growth has no special technical or economic justification to warrant it.

The Government is (or so we are informed) to set up such a Commission soon, but it is essential that this Commission consist of people who are honest impartial and expert. The justification for the first two requisites, namely, honesty and impartiality, is self-evident. As for expertise, economic expertise is necessary to determine the economic considerations behind the growth of projects and engineering expertise is needed to go into the technical aspects of the matter. I am not satisfied at the low coercive power given to the Commission by Government (its recommendations are not to be binding on anyone). The main thing is to see that the proposed Commission will not have a big business man as its chairman! This is not beyond the realm of possibility even today.

(E) *Financial Institutions:* The Committee has recommended that the economic ministries should be closely associated with policy making and direction of the financial institutions. This suggestion does not have much to commend it. The proper body to make policy formulations is the Planning Commission. It is the business of the ministries to see that this policy is carried out. As for making the financial institutions virtual wings of the ministries, this will lead to inefficient action, slow disposal of cases and all manner of arbitrary actions. The financial institutions should be subject only to the regulatory control of the Reserve Bank and the Ministry of Finance (to a lesser extent).

The recommendations that the LIC get involved in the granting of term loans to industries and that the SBI do so with regard to the small and medium enterprises, is a good one.

In fact, I am not sure if now is not the time to

make the SBI cater largely to the needs of the small and medium enterprises. Let it expand in small townships and concentrate on giving financial assistance to the small and medium enterprises. At present, the SBI is not helping these to the extent desirable. Moreover, its inefficient modes of operation and slow service seriously hamper the small enterprises.

Help Small Entrepreneurs

The suggestions that the financial institutions and in particular the IDBI build up a body of experts to scrutinise proposals, as also that aid be given on more liberal terms to essential industries, are well worth implementing. The suggestion that the financial institutions stop their underwriting activity is not a timely one. The Indian stock market is still very weak and until investor confidence and support is fully built up, financial underwriting should continue—but only in the case of companies which do not have "monopolistic" tendencies and which are essential ones. The suggestion that loans should be converted into equity is not a good one (vide my article in *Mainstream* of January 10, 1970).

The suggestion that the LIC should play a more active role in the direction of the ICICI is a good one, as also that the boards of financial institutions should largely consist of experts in various fields.

This then is the Report. I am sorry that it is priced too high (at Rs 22) for the majority of people to afford to buy it and that copies are not too freely available. I would suggest that an abridged version of the Report be brought out to inform public opinion on the defects in licensing and the shabby way in which the Government has so far functioned.

It is essential that public opinion be developed against the misuse of Government authority by self-seeking persons, so that we may have no further need of a Committee to go into and expose as ruthlessly as the present one has done the fact that several people exist in the higher echelons of power who should (to put it mildly) not be there at all but in jail. I hope that these people will be relentlessly exposed and brought to book. This is the only way in which we can prevent the further misuse of radical instruments for and anti-radicalist ends.

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Banks and Agricultural Development

HARDIP SINGH

CREDIT has been labelled as the life blood of modern economy, and financial infrastructure, being the fountainhead of credit, occupies a strategic place in all the developing economies. By the end of July 1969, total resources in the hands of all scheduled commercial banks in India were estimated at Rs 4,655 crores. This, when placed alongside the total outlay of Rs 24,500 crores during the Fourth Plan period, gives one an idea of the immense influence which this sector could exert on the magnitude and sectoral distribution of total investible resources in the economy.

Thus, the rationale or folly of the decision to nationalise the top fourteen commercial banks in the country should be viewed in the context of our twin objectives during the Fourth Plan period, namely, a 5.5 per cent rate of growth in national income, and a more equitable distribution of the fruits of planned development among the various sections of the population.

Banking sector sets the pace and direction of the economic development mainly through its influence on the three variables, that is, quantum of money supply, rate of saving, and investment pattern.

Now money is one of those things whose production, with the passage of time, has come to rest with the public authority. Thus, in almost all the modern economies central banks have been nationalised. However, with the development of the society, credit comes to play even a bigger role. In developed economies, credit accounts for more than 70 per cent of the total transactions. In India, during the period of last eighteen years, advances of all scheduled commercial banks have been rising at a rate of 10 to 15 per cent. It is in this context that many of the economists of the eminence of Professor Milton Friedman have begun to accommodate the idea that to charter the economy safely along the road of planned development, Government authorities should associate themselves actively and positively with the machinery for credit expansion.

The other important growth parameter influenced by banking sector is propensity to save. To attract the marginal saving potentials of the economy, a well-developed financial infrastructure is immensely important. Further, in order to tap the saving potential most efficiently, it is necessary that a net-

work of banks covers whole of the economy, the intensity being proportional to the potential. The failure of our commercial banks in this field is highlighted by the fact that while in Switzerland, Japan, Thailand and the UAR, deposits of scheduled commercial banks as a percentage to their GNP figure are 92, 70, 22 and 19 respectively, in India, this proportion has not crossed even the 15 per cent mark. Apparently, this is due to their attitude of indifference and apathy towards the rural sector. This sector which contributes about half of the national income does not account for more than half per cent of the total deposits of scheduled commercial banks. And lack of banking facilities in the area is one major cause of this malady.

Concentration of Investible Resources

Last, but not the least, is the effect of advance and loan policy of commercial banks on the investment pattern of economy has been of much consequence. Under private control, their investment policies are guided by market forces, invariably influenced by the individual point of view of profitability and security of investment. Consequently, Government efforts to alleviate sectional and regional disparities in the economy through planned development, loses much of their sharpness. Investment resources at the disposal of these banks get concentrated in certain sectors and in certain areas in the economy and generally in the hands of those persons who have a "say" in the investment policies of these institutions. Thus, in India, while the total advances of scheduled commercial banks increased from Rs 580 crores in 1951 to Rs 2,346 crores in 1966, the percentage of advances to the industrial sector expanded from 33.5 per cent to 64 per cent, and the same for agriculture sector declined from 2.2 per cent to 0.2 per cent. There is also a heavy transference of resources from non-industrial regions to industrial pockets. No wonder that after about two decades of planned development, regional disparities continue to be as acute. The contribution of banking sector to the growth of monolithic monopoly houses in the economy cannot be exaggerated. It has been estimated that more than one half of the loans and advances of these banks have been swallowed up by those industrial houses where a major chunk of directorships are held by only a handful of bank directors.

The author, a contributor to various journals on economic subjects, was associated with the preparation of some reports of the National Council of Applied Economic Research.

Nationalisation of the fourteen banks *ipso facto* had drawn popular attention to the question of how these resources would be harnessed towards fulfilling the two basic objectives of the Fourth Plan. With the latest Ordinance, regularising bank take-over after Supreme Court verdict, the impact of the decision to expand credit facilities for the agricultural sector can now become the yardstick to assess the degree of the fulfilment of the Plan objectives.

The significance of this decision for agriculture assumes new proportions in the context of the new "agricultural" strategy taking roots in the rural sector. Agriculture landscape in India has undergone many important changes during the last decade, specially during the last two years. General index of agricultural production, which stood at 142 in 1960-61 (base 1949-50=100), rose to 162 in 1967-68. Production of foodgrains has gone up from 82 million tonnes in 1960-61 to 98 million tonnes in 1968-69. A novel feature of this increase in production is the remarkable progress made in the improvement of land productivity with the adoption of new scientific technology, non-traditional inputs and modern practices. Somewhat over half of the trend in increase in total crop production has been derived from higher yields per hectare. Area under high-yielding varieties has increased from a scratch in 1960-61 to about 8.5 million hectares in 1968-69, and irrigation facilities have spread over another eight million hectares. Consumption of chemical fertilizers has gone up from 306,000 tonnes to 1.98 million tonnes. Plant protection measures shelter about 54 million hectares.

These facts throw light on only one half of the picture. The other half consists of all those changes which contain in themselves the seeds of modernisation and commercialisation of this sector. The attitude of Indian farmer towards his input mix, cropping pattern, production techniques and marketing operations has undergone a revolutionary change. He is no longer obsessed with unproductive traditional practices. Towards each new invention and improvement he looks with enthusiasm and receptive response.

These structural changes are a new phenomenon in the history of Indian agriculture. The gleam of the budding "green revolution" has added a new lustre to the future of this sector. During the Fourth Plan, agriculture is expected to take even bigger strides in all directions. Overall growth rate is expected to range around five per cent. Foodgrain production is estimated to reach 129 million tonnes. Because in future the area under virgin soils would become operationally unexploitable, all efforts would be channelised towards intensive cultivation. The superstructure of a massive development plan would rest on Intensive Agricultural District Programme (IADP) and Intensive Agricultural Area Programme (IAAP). Under this, the area under the High-Yielding Varieties Programme (HYVP) is likely to extend to 24.1 million hectares. Irrigation facilities are envisaged to enlarge to 43.4 million hectares, about 1.24 million agricultural pumping sets are planned for energisation. Consumption of chemical fertilizer is estimated to reach 6.6 million

tonnes. Plant protection measures will be covering an area of 80 million hectares. With the result that agricultural produce is expected to rise from Rs 14,973 crores in 1967-68 to Rs 18,998 crores in 1973-74.

To perpetuate this pace of development and change is a national cause, and it requires the combined endeavour on the part of all sections of the economy. It needs no emphasis that no development can take place in a financial void. The present problem of commercialisation and modernisation of agriculture is to find additional resources for investment which, in terms of long-term needs, means programme for rural electrification, lift irrigation, mechanisation, contour bunding, storage development, etc., and in short-term needs more inputs supply and covering up of the production gap.

Machinery for Farm Finance

So far there is no satisfactory change in the agency set up for agriculture finance. In spite of the monumental work done by the State Bank of India and its subsidiaries in providing financial infrastructure in rural areas, hardly 25 to 30 per cent of the total credit requirements of this sector is being supplied by cooperative agencies. The gap still is being bridged by the traditional money lender, who is well known for his exploitation through exorbitant interest rates and malpractices. During the period of planned development, banking sector in India has recorded splendid progress; bank advances have risen from Rs 604 crores to Rs 2,708 crores, that is, at a rate of 10 to 15 per cent every year.

However, the fruits of this development have been monopolised by the secondary sector. The share of industry in the total bank advances has gone up from 34 per cent in 1951 to 64 per cent in 1967. Industry, commerce and financial sector claim as much as 87 per cent of the total bank advances. The Boards of Directors of these banking institutions being overloaded with industrial and commercial interests, agriculture and small-scale industry—the two king-pins of rural economy—have been virtually starved of funds. The share of agriculture comes to less than two per cent of the total bank advances, and even that is mainly confined to plantations and marketing interests. Small-scale industry, though contributing about 44 per cent of the total industrial output, does not account for more than 10 per cent of the total bank advances.

This attitude of indifference towards the rural economy could be traced to the myth that the security and productivity of investment in these areas is nowhere equal to that in urban areas. The operational cost of rural branches is also figured as 'too high. This individualistic and capitalistic approach of commercial banks surely betrays short-sightedness and conservatism. Experience shows that in the long run, once financial infrastructure takes roots in rural areas, the risk involved in lending in agriculture and allied activities is actually less than that in lending to other business.

So far as productivity is concerned, it might be said that in the wake of recent changes in agricultural operations in the direction of commercialisation and modernisation, conditions are likely to turn for the better. With the wider adoption of new agricultural strategy the farmer's income has become more stabilised. No doubt, due to the absence of a well-developed infrastructure, operational costs during the initial stages are necessarily high. However, the investment policies of nationalised banks could be framed in the context of larger national interests. These banks advancing under the guidance of the State Bank of India could do a significant job by providing a sound and extensive network of bank branches in hitherto uncovered areas.

Finances for New Programme

The plan of agricultural development in the Fourth Plan period is estimated to require a total credit of Rs 1,550 crores in the short term. This programme envisage the expansion of the HYVP over an area of about 24 million hectares and multiple-cropping in the whole of the irrigated area. The cooperative agencies are expected to supply Rs 650 crores to Rs 750 crores. The fourteen banks which had come under the State sector, should accept the challenge in covering up the gap.

However, if the impact of "green revolution" is to be spread over a larger area, a massive programme of development of infrastructure is also essential. Total credit requirements for this long-term programme are planned at Rs 1,650 crores. In this programme the Government agencies such as cooperatives, land development banks, Agriculture Refinance Corporation, agro-industries cooperatives play a leading role. These are likely to supply Rs 1,205 crores. The gap of Rs 415 crores could be bridged by the resources of these banks operating in the State sector. In addition, a campaign could have been launched by these banks to supply non-development credit to the farmers in order to uproot the traditional village moneylender, or at least to bring him to observe honest norms of lending.

Banking industry in India has vast resource at its command. With a small share capital of Rs 100 crores, these institutions command total deposits of Rs 3,500 crores. The fourteen banks now re-nationalised, had deposits of Rs 2,742 crores and total advances of Rs 1,744 crores at the end of 1968. Again, the changes in the deposit pattern of commercial banks during the last decade have displayed better potentials for credit creation. During the period, fixed deposits have gone up from one-fourth to one-half of the total deposits, and saving deposits from one-sixth to one-fourth. Even then, about half of the economy has not been exploited so far, hardly 0.5 per cent of the total deposits of commercial banks originate in rural sector. In the wake of recent changes in the income level and social awareness in these areas, vast resources have accumulated in the hands of a section of rural population waiting for sound investment channels.

To see that the vast resources at the disposal of these institutions could be distributed equitably

among the different sections of the economy, their investment priorities needed to be coordinated with those of the Planning Commission. The rationale or folly of the step could then be viewed mainly in the context as to what extent nationalisation helped in overcoming sectoral and regional disparities.

First of all, nationalisation most probably would result in higher costs of operation. Even otherwise operational costs were likely to be high in rural areas during the initial stages. Branch expansion programme, therefore, needed to be well organised and selective so as to keep costs at a low level. In this sphere these banks could exploit the practise of "one man offices" in remote areas.

Secondly, the nationalised banks could coordinate their operations in rural areas with that of the Government and cooperative agencies. For this purpose, the National Credit Council could be depended upon as a trusted guide. In the task of efficient delivery of agricultural inputs the help of Government extension agencies and service organisations could be availed. These agencies possess a better knowledge of prospects and problems of the area. It would have also eliminated any chance of duplication of service.

Thirdly, in their approach towards the prospective creditors these banks would have to adopt a new calculus of progressive bankers. The emphasis in their loan policy could be shifted from credit worthiness of the party to productive competence and merits of the project. A better approach was functioning in selected areas and on selected project basis. The task involved expert guidance and supervision in technical matters. State Governments, on their part, could set up "expert cells" at State levels for necessary help and guidance both to the bank and the farmer. Banks themselves need an organisational framework and requisite technical competence to evaluate and process the projects.

In this process, the best strategy is to go in for "one area one agency" system, all the credit requirements of the farmer being financed by one single agency. Package financing could be helpful to both the parties, to the farmer because he is not competent enough to keep accounts with too many agencies, and to the bank because it would minimise the chances of bungling.

Within the short period after nationalisation these banks had made a promising start in the field. Press reports are there about the progress made in fulfilling the credit requirements of a developing agriculture sector. The Central Bank of India has recently announced the selection of two districts of Rajasthan for intensive credit programme. Other nationalised banks were also engaged in vigorous activities to tackle various problems.

However, the Supreme Court judgement had cast a shadow over this healthy development of the banking institutions becoming an effective contributor and instrument of our national development programmes. One can only hope that the measures already undertaken will not be prematurely done away with, and steps taken to end any confusion without delay.

Ceiling on Incomes

KRIPA SHANKAR

ONE distinguishing feature of post-independence India has been that scramble to get rich quickly has gripped the large propertied classes in a frightfully madenning way

Not that the tendency was absent in pre-independence days, but this had a limited scope on account of the overall loot of the imperialists and the stagnation on the economic front

The Mahalanobis Committee found that the top one per cent of the population accounted for more than one-tenth of the national wealth and the top 10 per cent accounted for one-third of the country's wealth.

The Reserve Bank Survey has revealed that top five per cent of the rural households account for 37 per cent of the rural assets, and at the bottom, 30 per cent of the total rural house holds account for less than three per cent of the rural assets

Monopoly Houses

In the industrial field, the bulk of the finance provided by the state financial institutions like State Bank, Life Insurance Corporation, Industrial Finance Corporation, etc., has gone to big monopoly houses.

The growth of public sector has not undermined the position of the monopolies as the profitable consumer goods industries and their trade have been left over to the private sector. The public sector has been developed only in those fields where the magnitude of the investment was beyond the resources of the private entrepreneurs and the gestation period was long.

An idea of the rapid growth

of the top monopoly houses can be had from the Finance Minister's reply in the Lok Sabha. According to the facts placed before the House, the assets of Birlas have increased from Rs 293 crores in 1963-64 to Rs 480 in 1966-67. During the same period the Tata have risen from Rs 418 crores to Rs 547 crores, and that of Mafatlals from Rs 46 crores to Rs 106 crores.

Abject Poverty

On the other hand, the condition of the vast masses remained unchanged. Smt Indira Gandhi has told the Lok Sabha that according to the National Sample Survey (1963-64), 82 per cent of the rural population in India, numbering about 36 crores, spend less than one rupee per day. The NSS data which the Prime Minister referred to, has revealed that more than one-fifth of the total population spends less than 50 paise per day. Among them, the poorest 11 crores spend less than 40 paise per day.

The economic development in India in the post-independence period has been nearly the slowest in the whole world. This too has been achieved at a tremendous cost in terms of sacrifices of the masses and its gains have been appropriated by a microscopic minority at the top.

Such being the actual experience, a ceiling on incomes, therefore, becomes essential, even in the narrow sense of accelerating the growth rate of economy, and more so in a country where a planned growth is desired.

It is well known that underdeveloped countries, on account

of their general poverty, lack resources for meeting investments to step up production in the various branches of economy. In spite of huge manpower, the underdeveloped economies fail to move forward because there is not enough capital to employ the surplus population in gainful work.

In the past, foreign loans were incurred, and deficit financing and taxation on commodities were resorted to with a view to mobilise resources for investment. Its social cost has been depressing. Any further resort to these measures is likely to bring little good to the economy. Resource mobilization will have to be done in non-traditional ways if we aspire for a higher growth rate.

In a context where income of a section has risen disproportionately, there is all the greater justification in imposing a ceiling on income above a certain limit so that the surplus may be made available for productive investments. This is a sound way open to the country to solve the problem of resource mobilisation. It will be anti-inflationary and will not result in serious distortions of the economy that we have witnessed during the last two decades.

Surplus Wealth

It will also create the much-needed mass enthusiasm, for, people will see that the well-to-do classes are being forced to part with their surplus wealth for nation-building activities and the foundations of a just social order are being laid.

Such a ceiling will cut at the root of many a social and economic malaise with which the country is afflicted. Profiteering, blackmarketing, corruption and graft which are nothing but the manifestation of insatiable lust for unlimited wealth and riches will be given a decent burial provided the ceiling limits are reasonably low and are enforced with an iron hand. Our problem of resource mobilisation will become easier and the dependence on foreign aid can be done away with in that eventuality.

Ulster And British Occupation

SCHOFIELD CORYELL

As British troops patrol the cities and the countryside of Ulster—ever since the violent clashes between the Catholics and the Protestants last August—the underlying discontent caused by the systematic oppression of the Catholic minority continues to seethe, while the Protestant power-structure, backed by widespread mass hysteria, shows no sign of readiness to reform.

The massive entry of British troops on the scene in August (at the call of the Ulster regime) led to the gradual dismantling of the barricades in the embattled Catholic areas of Belfast and in "Free Derry"—the Catholic ghetto of Bogside, Londonderry, which had been temporarily under the control of the aroused citizenry.

New Chapter

A new chapter in the Irish freedom struggle was thereby opened up, with the imminent possibility of direct confrontation between the Irish people, Catholic and Protestant, and some 6,000 British forces (since increased to 8,000) armed to the teeth and henceforth directly responsible for "law and order".

An official British Government inquiry—the famous Cameron Report, published in September—admitted that genuine "social and economic grievances" of the Catholic minority, particularly in the fields of housing and jobs were the "immediate and operative cause of the demonstrations and consequent disorders" that began in October 1968 and reached a climax in the summer of 1969.

But the Report imputed to "extremists of Right and Left" equal responsibility for the "tragic events in which the vast majority of the population of Northern Ireland have neither hand nor concern" (shades of Nixon's "silent majority"). As the mildly liberal *New Statesman* summed it up: "The Unionist Government was found guilty of 50 years of neglect, but the Civil Rights opposition, established to force reforms through, is apparently insane."

Blatant Discrimination

Not surprisingly, the Ulster Government, in its own "commentary", commended the Cameron Report for "confirming publicly and independently the operation within Northern Ireland of persons whose immediate and deliberate intention it is to prepare, plan, and provoke violence reckless of the consequences to persons or property."

This was not a reference to the Right-wing Protestant extremists, of course, but to the Left-wingers. Tongue-in-check, the Northern Ireland Government then proceeded to acknowledge "genuinely held grievances" of the Catholics.

Since September, the Ulster Government and Parliament (Stormont) have been making at least a pretence of studying the means of partially palliating some of the grievances mentioned in the Cameron Report. Under consideration are schemes for reorganizing local government and eliminating blatant discrimination in the allocation of housing through the establishment of a central housing authority.

But the mere possibility of reform in the interests of the Catholic community has touched off a powerful backlash movement of ultra-Rightist in the ruling Unionist party—the party dominated by the ancient Orange Order and devoted to the maintenance of "Protestant Ascendancy".

Local units of the Unionist Party have served notice that they will tolerate no gestures of appeasement to the Catholic community and the reactionary Prime Minister himself, Chichester-Clark, now judged too "soft", has been removed as vice-chairman of his own Union Party branch in Londonderry.

Repressive Force

It is symptomatic that, while the Protestant fascist leader, Reverend Paisley, is riding higher than ever, the mild liberal, Terence O'Neill—forced to resign as Premier last year by the ultras now in power—has just announced his complete retirement from the political arena.

Owing to the particularly violent conduct of the famous "B-Specials", the extremist Protestant volunteer police force in the August repression, the British Government felt obliged to set up a new supplementary police force—officially dubbed the Ulster Defence Regiment—to replace it.

But, by the Defence Minister's own admission, this new 6,000-man force, to be locally recruited under the authority of the British Commanding Officer in Ulster, will consist for the most part of the former "B-Specials" any way.

In view of this, the charge has been made, not unreasonably, by some British MPs and Ulster Catholics that the new proposed regiment will merely be, as Labor MP Eric Heffer bluntly expressed it, "an old force under a new name". It will be heavily armed.

According to Defence Minister Healey, the new force is intended specifically for "defence against guerrilla attacks" and against "sabotage". The Police Re-organization Bill also provides for the creation of a new special

police reserve to assist the Royal Ulster Constabulary (now disarmed) in its usual police duties, including "crowd control".

Despite criticisms expressed by several Labor MPs and a particularly vitriolic attack by the Left-wing Ulsterite, Bernadette Devlin, the Police Re-organization Bill was approved by Parliament in November, and will be operative as of April 1. Essentially, the only difference between the new set-up and the previous one is that the British Commanding Officer is henceforth in control of the Ulster police.

While this situation causes a certain amount of uneasiness among the Protestant extremists, it is hardly a consolation to the Catholics.

Anti-Catholic Bias

Meanwhile, the trend of recent Ulster decisions shows clearly how the authorities intend to implement the recommendations of the Cameron Report in the field of "law and order".

On the one hand, 16 Ulster Policemen were cleared at the end of January of charges of misconduct during the repression in the Catholic ghettos last August. The police—accused of using excessive force and causing unnecessary malicious damage to the Catholic quarters—were completely exonerated by the British Inspector-General of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, who pointed out that the "entire police force had been working under abnormal stress at the time".

In contrast with this demonstration of leniency—which angered the Catholic community—the Londonderry Magistrate's Court the previous month imposed a six-month sentence on Bernadette Devlin for her activities in the "Free Derry" fortress during the August upsurge.

Accusations against Miss Devlin range from "riotous behavior" to "assaulting and obstructing police" and "inciting persons unknown to riotous and disorderly behavior". She is appealing against the verdict to the highest Ulster Court—the Court of Appeal of Northern

Ireland—on the grounds that the court systematically ruled out all evidence of violent police behavior against the Catholic population on previous occasions. This record of police brutality, she contends, created a fear of the police and justified the community's measures of legitimate self-defense in August.

As her Defence Attorney, Sir Dingle Foote, pointed out "She did not in any way encourage aggression. What she did was encourage resistance."

The condemnation of Bernadette in December fits into a pattern of repression. The latest move in this direction was the passage by the Ulster Parliament this month of a Public Order Act designed to restrict, if not prevent, all demonstrations and public mass protests. Civil Rights and Peoples Democracy militants openly defied the Act in Belfast last week-end, but there was no explosion although the political atmosphere was electric with tension, as soldiers and police ominously surrounded the protestors.

In this climate of mounting struggle and hardening repression, the British troops have found themselves increasingly unpopular. Welcomed last August by the Catholics in their embattled ghettos, they are now resented by both the communities.

Catholics as well as Protestants taunt them on the streets as they

perform patrol duty, and there have been several instances of bomb explosions in army barracks as well as direct clashes between soldiers and people. The troops are in an extremely nervous mood and there are persistent rumours of several suicides among them.

The British military authorities speak of a campaign to "win the hearts and minds of the people", but the reality is much uglier. Protestants feel that the British troops are preventing them from venting their wrath on the Catholics, while the Catholics see them increasingly as the instruments of the hereditary enemy British imperialism.

Meanwhile, the economic conditions in Ulster have been going from bad to worse as unemployment grows, thereby increasing the danger of intensified conflict between the Catholic and Protestant workers for scarce jobs. In the month of January alone, over 3,000 lay-offs have been reported, as several important English-owned firms suddenly decided to curtail their operations in Ulster.

Left-wing militants in the civil rights movement, the radical Peoples Democracy and the clandestine Irish Republican Army are striving hard—but without as yet much success—to channelise the discontent of the working-class in a non-sectarian Socialist direction against the power-structure.

Beef In Ancient India

by

RAJA RAJENDRALALA MITRA

Being a reprint of Chapter VI of the author's book *Indo-Aryans*, Vol I, published originally in 1881

Price: Rs 1 50

MANISHA GRANTHALAYA

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U.S. SCENE

This article, by the Chairman of the Board of IBM, reproduced from the well-known *I F Stone's Bi-Weekly* of January 26, 1970, will be of topical interest to Indian readers. In the introduction to the article, the editor says that none of the basic problems of the 70s is going to be soluble without fundamental changes in the structure of the American Government. The most important of these is national planning. Every big business in America plans but the biggest business of all, the management of the country's resources is unplanned, and at the mercy of powerfully organized business (and labour) groups, which exploit the weaker sectors of the economy. National planning has been a dirty word ever since the early Fifties, when merely to mention it was politically suspect. On the eve of a Presidential message expected to deal, with the suddenly fashionable problem of the environment, we print here an unusual speech by one of America's biggest big business men which breaks the ice on the question of national planning. It was originally delivered on January 7 to the Bond Club of New York. The interlocked problems of pollution, poverty, racism, urban sprawl and arms spending will not be solved unless we find a way to match needs with resources and set priorities as national goals five or 10 years ahead.

Call for National Planning

THOMAS J. WATSON JR

TEN years back, in the twilight years of the Eisenhower era,

I served with some very distinguished Americans on a committee called the Commission on National Goals. Some of the names of the members are still familiar. Frank Pace, John Gardner, Clark Kerr and August Heckscher. Our job, back in the late 1950s, was to suggest goals for our country in the 1960s, and two things surprised me at the time. First was the realization that this country had no very specific goals set down on paper, and second was the realization that no matter what goals we chose, there was practically no mechanism in Government to methodically implement them—and there isn't now.

The nation was bouncing along as it is now, geared to annual appropriations by Congress in about the way it had in the 19th century. There was no road map, there was no one to say—here's where we are, here's where we want to go, and here's the route to get there.

In most businesses, and certainly in highly technological industries,

the United States has learned how to set fairly precise goals. We have learned that we have to implement them, step-by-step, in a disciplined way over a long period of time.

I believe that the complexity of our modern economy demands national goal setting and planning closely paralleling that which is common place in industry.

Looking at the goals we named a decade ago and reviewing what actually happened is interesting. The nation did aim toward many of those recommendations in the 60s. We saw vast increases in higher education, for example, and enormous growth in our economy, our commission really did not set these goals and identify them to the country for the first time, rather they are implicit in the United States—we merely emphasized them.

But we missed some of the problems of the time—pollution, for example, did not get much attention and we were overly concerned about others, like Appalachia as a specific area of poverty, rather than a country-wide condition.

And our call to stop Communism anywhere—despite the price—drifted us into an unattainable goal in Vietnam. Since we have no formal mechanism to study, adjust, and reset our national priorities in an integrated fashion, we pursued the Vietnam goal to a costly point. The lives of 40,000 of our men have been lost, vast resources have been wasted, and the morale of our youth eroded.

This and other lessons convince me that we must recognize the existence of national goals. They are not formally set, but they are there nevertheless. Today they are mixture of party platforms, State of the Union messages, and editorial nagging—from it all comes that elusive thing called public opinion, and from public opinion comes direction.

The national goals of this country should be set and restudied annually. They should be costed and readjusted on an integrated basis just as a larger industrial enterprise sets and controls its goals. This process cannot come about by the periodic appointment of national goals commissions like the one I served on.

New Agency

What we need is a completely new governmental body; perhaps a Senate/House/Citizen group, to sit permanently on this matter and report to the President. Congress would have to pass enabling legislation giving this commission substantial power if it is to do the job that is needed. For instance, I believe we can pour as much concrete as we want to pour in this country. If we are serious about rebuilding the cities, they will be rebuilt, if we are serious about cleaning up pollution, Manhattan will have Hudson and East River swimming clubs by 1980.

There's another lesson from the 60s which is basic in talking about the coming decade. We have learned something about economics in recent years. Depression is no longer inevitable, in fact, we can look forward to rapid and fairly steady economic growth if we are wise in the way

we manage the economy. This is essential to our national goals, we can have more resources—we can do more

A reasonable estimate for ten years from now shows a \$1.5 trillion economy, in today's dollars, a per capita income that has grown from the \$3,140 of today to \$4,370, and Government revenues, Federal, State and local, that will have grown from \$303 billion to half a trillion. The resources will be there, but what are we trying to achieve with them?

Think Again

Are we still aiming at eliminating Communism? Well, we had better think again. It is a happy comfortable thought to believe that we can indeed make ourselves relatively safe and the Soviet Union relatively unsafe with anti-missile missiles, and so forth.

But think a little deeper. Our efforts might leave 50 million survivors here at home instead of 25 when the holocaust is over, while we kill two-thirds of the Russians instead of only one-half. This, to me, is only half thinking and, if we set our national goals on this basis, we will be following an impossible path.

If I am correct then, one goal which we should have in our minds for the 1970s, is a more relaxed attitude, a detente, if you will, toward the more tractable Communist countries.

The most important national priority is first reaching some kind of arrangement with the Soviets. A lot is riding on those negotiations that began in Helsinki. If they fail, the 1970s will tend to be a replay of the 60s with defence absorbing a goodly share of the new resources we generate.

The failures of the 60s were not entirely for want of resources. While defence took 37 per cent of our new money, health, welfare, and education got over 40 per cent. The failures stem from different reasons. Let me mention them, for I have come to believe that they are engrained in the way we manage our national affairs.

Money is essential, but is no longer enough. A major shortcoming, I believe, is that we do not take into account the differences between a fully utilized economy and an economy where there are slack and unused resources. Essentially throughout the late 60s the US was an economy running beyond safe limits, and it is likely to be running flat out through the 70s.

When that is the situation, a Government programme which pours money into one section of the economy does not call forth unemployed labour or idle plants; there are not any. What it does is reallocate. It takes from one part of the economy and gives to another.

I do not believe this was understood, for instance, when Congress passed the Medicaid Bill. Medicaid essentially gave one group, and a very deserving one, the purchasing power to compete for an already scarce resource, health care. Medicaid did not build more hospitals, it did not train more doctors and nurses.

It did not, so far as I know, even do much to impact our worst medical shortcoming, the high infant mortality rate in this country—one of the highest in the developed world. I do not think the current result should be too surprising—spiralling medical costs as the public sector bids against the private for an inelastic supply.

Complex Economy

I am sure this was not understood when our legislators, with the very best of intentions, voted for Medicaid. I use it to illustrate a point about goals. In the new and complex economy, without the luxury of idle resources, one goal diverts resources from another, and we have to factor this into the decision making.

Just as General Motors cannot develop two new Cadillacs for 1971, so the US must balance and compromise toward an integrated set of goals and accomplishments. If health care is not adequate, then the first step should be training doctors and

nurses; the second is bringing into the system people who have been neglected.

I do not object to seeing both of those steps carried out simultaneously, but, as you know, the step that we took was the second one, and the first one still has not been attended to.

We are undertaking change through the instrument of Government, on a scale of vastness that we never even contemplated before. We are trying to get the results of detailed planning without the discipline of planning. Currently, we are talking about a dreadful housing shortage which increase during the 70s.

I see little evidence that this is reflected in increased enrolment in architectural schools, in vocational schools, in new approaches too zoning and land condemnation or in relaxation of building trades' work rules. We have to understand that if you want another 26 million housing units by 1980, a lot has to happen in 1970, and I do not think that it is.

We have littered the last decade with the bones of good intentions, and we have come out disillusioned and angry. Just as we have learned something about economics, imperfectly, but something, we have the beginnings of a science of input/output analysis.

We are beginning to understand how parts of the economy inter-relate, how things fit together and affect each other; with today's rapid communications and computer abilities, it is becoming possible to test alternatives—to know if a programme is workable and to get some feeling on what its real costs will be before we commit this enormous nation to an unrealistic or incomplete goal.

Less developed, but becoming feasible, are some new ways of understanding our people resources; and we know that people are not infinitely versatile. A bond trader makes a very fine executive, but so far none of them has done much in nuclear physics. To what degree can we shift—to what degree can we find people to take on new tasks?

That, I believe, is our greatest constraint, and it is not considered

very often. As I said earlier, if we are going to get these problems solved in the future, goal setting and goal analysis has to be elevated in Government. Presidential commissions are not enough, and have got to get started.

In the final analysis it is not really hard to set most of our goals—education, health care, a decent standard of living—there is nothing very complicated about what we want. It will be harder to decide on priorities, but that is what the political process is all about. The real gain, if what I am suggesting can be made to work, is quite different.

The debate about the priorities could be limited to the possible, and the tradeoffs, which are mostly ignored today, would be understood. A new congressional programme offered to the country as a congressional bill

would have to be integrated to the overall goals and priorities of the country before being presented to the public, and its impact on all of the other programmes would be presented at the same time.

Magnified Criticism

Finally, I believe we should begin to acknowledge our successes. One by-product of the way we manage today is the endless dialogue of despair. Well-intentioned people believe the only way the national dinosaur can be moved is by noisily kicking it.

Their criticism is magnified in minds less experienced and less aware of where we have come from and where other societies are now. The result increasingly is nihilism in the young—a rejection of America without any appreciation of what it is achieving. A permanent goals body

would not only set the goals—it would report progress and achievement.

As an institution begins to grow, it must change the way it manages its affairs. This is true in business, and it is no less true in Government. Without goals *explicit* goals, and plans for getting from A to B, we do not know where we are going, and we do not know whether or not we will have the resources to get there.

It is a sad thing, a very sad thing when a nation like this one has to creep into a new decade with its tail between its legs. I do not want to do that again. I want to sail into the 1980s—and I want to see flags flying and hear bands playing. We can do that, I am convinced, if we are willing to take a hard, cold and constant look at how we are running the biggest enterprise in the world.



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Pakistan at Crossroads

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GENERAL Yahya Khan's experiment in parliamentary democracy is being watched with great interest by Pakistan's neighbours

The question whether the Army is genuinely keen on withdrawing to the barracks and hand over the country to its volatile and unscrupulous politicians, is difficult to answer. Whether the Army has learnt any lesson from the abject fall of the Ayub regime is also not discernible.

From the resignation of Air Marshal Nur Khan, who was considered the next most powerful man in the ruling military hierarchy, it appears that Yahya Khan has laid down certain guide-lines for the Army. He is aware of the fact that ten years of total control of political authority has highly politicalised it. A sudden denial of power will create tensions in the ranks. The Army has arrogated the role of guiding the destinies of the country and has also developed a tremendous sense of superiority.

Nur Khan's Resignation

Pakistan has, therefore, joined ranks of those countries where the Army teaches its people a few lessons in how to be good democrats. Perhaps Yahya Khan has planned to emulate the Turkish example where the Army, having withdrawn from the Government, remains an effective factor in determining the country's domestic and external policies.

The immediate reason for Nur Khan's mysterious resignation cannot be found out easily in the situation which prevails in Pakistan. However, judging from his past record, it appears he has been apprehensive of the

dominant position East Pakistan will attain in the parliamentary system. The agreement on proportional representation in the proposed constituent assembly, the Air Marshal apprehended, would logically lead to Dacca demanding parity in the civil service and the armed forces. Nur Khan is one of those Punjabi officers who have effectively blocked the entry of the Bengalees in the Army and the Air Force.

Political Ambitions

The argument is first, Punjabis are a martial race, hence they should get priority, secondly, Punjab will remain the theatre of war in case of an Indo-Pak conflict, and thirdly, unemployment and discontent in bordering Punjab can prove of greater risk than elsewhere. But Punjabi chauvinism is a much deeper reason than the three put together. Like his predecessor Air Marshal Asgher Khan, he is also considered by the Punjabi vested interests as their saviour and the right man to deal firmly with the inalcitrant Bengalees.

With his experience in international diplomacy which took him to Moscow, Peking and Washington on important missions, he developed political ambitions. He found great strength in the feeling that the Punjabis would prefer the perpetuation of the army rule to the preferential treatment for the Bengalees.

This is a significant psychological factor in the crisis between the two wings. Punjabis or the Urdu-speaking Pakistanis cannot conceive of their "superior Muslim culture", traditions and history being placed at par with

its "Bengali Hindu" equivalent. How can national poet Allama Sir Mohammed Iqbal, who conceived the idea of Pakistan, be reduced to the depths of Rabindra Nath Tagore or Nazrul Islam? It was this sense of ingrained chauvinism which led them to proscribe Rabindra Sangeet on Dacca Radio, ban books by Bengali authors analysing the social history of East Pakistan, and reducing financial aid to the organisations engaged in the promotion of Bengali literature.

Nur Khan symbolises these jingoistic trends and the East Pakistanis are aware of it. In his desire to forge a reconciliation with the Bengalee leadership and the intelligentsia, Yahya Khan had to take some effective practical step, and one of them was the removal of Air Marshal Nur Khan. What repercussions it will have in West Pakistan only time will show, but this is surely not the end of the episode. It is the beginning of a grim drama. The hope that the restoration of democratic order might bridge the gulf between the two wings may end in mutual disillusionment, and this places the Army in an enviable position.

Notwithstanding Yahya Khan's apparent desire to accept the supremacy of the elected political authority, the long and ominous shadow of the Army will continue to fall on the proposed democratic framework. This is inevitable and the reasons are not far to seek.

Since its establishment the Army had a powerful role to play in shaping the events. After Partition, a considerable section of the Muslim intelligentsia—particularly the political section of it—remained in India. The intellectual and social level of the politicians who assumed power in Pakistan were handicapped by the lack of political and administrative experience. It was, therefore, natural that the political parties functioned in a social vacuum unaware of the regional and economic problems of the new State.

The background of the Muslim League and the movement it carried on for the attainment of its goal was such that intolerance

owards enlightened elements pressing for radical changes in the system was inevitable. They were either suppressed, jailed or thrown out of the country. It made the political authority fall an easy prey to the Army and the bureaucracy, the two highly organised and educated sections of the society.

They found no resistance in gaining control on the situation. They functioned as an effective and cohesive force. Even while Liaquat Ali Khan was alive, the first and the last effective Prime Minister, it was said that the country had only two well-organised parties—the Army and the bureaucracy.

Continuing Domination

In his scholarly work of the formative years, *Pakistan A Political Study*, Keith Callard has analysed their role. The Army and the civil service, he points out, were deeply involved in class interests and played a decisive role in formulating its politics, economy and foreign relations. The capture of power by General Ayub Khan in 1958 was, in fact, just a dramatic moment in this continuing domination.

From the very beginning, bureaucracy maintained direct links with the landed aristocracy and the national bourgeoisie. It used its vast powers of control over every field of business and industry to promote its influence. Its special relationship gradually merged as a trinity made up of the Army, bureaucracy and the bourgeoisie, which now rules the country. The well known 20 monopolists families are the logical outcome of this social structure.

The ascendancy of the Army was established during Liaquat Ali Khan's tenure of Prime Ministership. Though he held the Defence portfolio, he found the time to attend to the problems of this Ministry. Colonel Mohammed Ahmed, who has been the confidant of Ayub Khan for a number of years, has alluded to this anomalous situation in his *My Chief*. The

formulation of the country's defence policy, he writes, was left to the Defence Secretary and the Commander-in-Chief by "default". The two kept the Cabinet in the dark about their functions.

This was the time when America was executing its scheme of tying Pakistan, Iran, Turkey and Iraq into an anti-Soviet defence pact. The Pentagon, in these conditions, ignored the political authority and established a direct pipe-line to these two persons. American Secretary of State John Foster Dulles preferred to have direct talks with Commander-in-Chief Ayub Khan in Karachi in 1953. The negotiations resulted in the arms deal, bilateral treaties and the defence pact.

Ayub Khan treated Liaquat Ali Khan's successors, who also held the Defence portfolio, with utter contempt. He threw files on their table in rage if his arguments failed to receive their appreciation. This he himself disclosed during his first election campaign against Miss Fatima Jinnah. Criticising former Prime Minister Chaudhry Muhammed Ali, he said "This man used to hide in his office like a mouse whenever I approached him."

The Army received support in its independent role from the top rung of the civil service. The 82 members of the ICS, who migrated to Pakistan in 1947, held the reigns of power in the absence of effective public opinion and due to the anarchy at the political level. The important factor which contributed to the "compact loyalties" between the top brass and the bureaucratic elite was that most of them came from Punjab. They were motivated by similar ambitions.

The urge to monopolise power reached a climax when Ayub Khan imposed himself on the Government as Defence Minister and refused to relinquish the office of the Commander-in-Chief. He was, therefore, his own Defence Minister. The political authority by that time was so much demoralised that resistance to his soaring ambitions was found futile.

After Ayub Khan captured power, he appointed an ICS

officer, Aziz Ahmed, as his Deputy Chief Martial Law officer. His first Cabinet had three ICS officers and four generals. The ten years of his rule consolidated the firm hold of the trinity. The situation has not changed after the advent of Yahya Khan.

A significant feature of the current political life is that the dozen and odd political parties (and their leaders) which are allowed limited freedom to function, have learnt no new lesson. A decade of wilderness has not chastened them. Their approach to the basic problems, their social outlook and the pattern of their behaviour have undergone no visible change. The discarded politicians and their groups with no roots among the masses have re-emerged, especially in West Pakistan. Yahya Khan faces a far greater predicament ushering in democracy than his predecessor did in rooting it out.

The post-Ayub political situation is more chaotic than it was ten years ago. The issues that divide the people in the two wings have become sharper. The economic disparity and the emotional gulf between East and the West Pakistan have assumed disproportionate dimensions and the rigid postures from both sides hold no promise of a feasible reconciliation.

Politically also, the two wings are advancing in diametrically opposite directions. While, in West Pakistan, conservatism is the dominant theme, in the eastern wing, the accent is towards Leftism. In West Pakistan, it is factional politics and the issues revolve around personalities and their whims. In the eastern wing, it is mass upsurge which has taken in its fold the suppressed bourgeoisie, middle classes, students, intellectuals, workers and peasants. In East Pakistan, people have found a common meeting ground and that is to wrest as much power and authority as is possible from the western wing, short of disintegrating the country.

In West Pakistan the ideological clash is between the so-called socialists led by impetuous Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and the obscurantist forces personified by

Maulana Abul Ala Maudoodi. Bhutto's People's Party with its manifesto of socialism, Islam and democracy, is a recent urban phenomenon. Its influence is confined to the demoralised intelligentsia, shopkeepers, and a section of the students. His pro-Peking stance and the intense hatred of India carry an appeal to a large number of people in this section. The fact that he was the first man who ventured to challenge President Ayub Khan's supremacy, has gone in his favour.

A section of Punjabi intelligentsia and the Army welcome Bhutto's rise because he can act as a deterrent to the regionalist groups of G M Syed in Sind and Wali Khan in NWFP. Though Wali Khan's National Awami Party is not a purely regional projection, it has adherents all over West Pakistan, its socialism is more defined and articulate than that of Bhutto's. Wali Khan opened the doors of his party to some prominent Leftists and has favoured the removal of the ban on the Communist Party.

Some of Bhutto's staunch detractors are found among the Leftists. He could not succeed in forging an alliance with Maulana Bhashani's equally pro-Peking National Awami Party, and no other party in West Pakistan is inclined to reach an electoral understanding with him.

In fact, the West Pakistan chief of the NAP (Bhashani group), C R Aslam, brands Bhutto as a phoney socialist and an agent of Sindhi landlords. A seasoned Leftist, Aslam puts his views in forthright manner and directs attacks at both Bhutto and Maudoodi. Islam and socialism, he says, are incompatible, and Bhutto is indulging in verbal jugglery. The socialist way for the economy cannot be found within an Islamic framework. The Islamic economic system of "Zakat" is outmoded in a sense that it expects every citizen—capitalist or worker—to "donate" two-and-a-half per cent of his income to the state exchequer.

Aslam maintains that socialism cannot be brought about without ending monopolies, nationalising key industries and

introducing comprehensive land reforms. Bhutto is not willing to radicalise his socialism. In his queer mixture of Islamic socialism, social equality gets the pride of place and economic parity next.

Bhutto's main urban rival is the Jamaat-i-Islami which is perhaps the chief beneficiary of Ayub Khan's decade of rule. It is no more a clandestine organisation and has infiltrated among the students, bureaucrats, intelligentsia, the Police and the Army. It enjoys the powerful support of the monopoly houses and the landed aristocracy in Punjab and Sind. With his messianic appeal, Maulana Maudoodi symbolises West Pakistani chauvinism. His books and collection of speeches in Urdu, Sindhi and Pushtu are sold in thousands.

Quranic Order

The basic ingredient of his "Pakistan ideology", thrown up as a challenge to "alien socialist ideology" is the establishment of the Quranic order in the country. In Islamic democracy, according to the Maudoodi thesis, sovereignty resides in God, and in the Islamic code of life the law to govern is framed by God and is enshrined in the Quran. These cannot be modified or amended.

Property is sacred and nationalisation is an encroachment on the rights of the citizen. In order to make it *Darul Islam*—the place for Islam—laws prohibiting liquor, birth control, eating pork, erecting statues, singing and dancing will have to be promulgated.

Despite these extraordinary views, the Jamaat has made deep inroads in every walk of life. The trade unionists are facing a considerably tough time in preventing the workers falling under its narcotic influence. One of the largest labour unions belonging to the Pakistan International Airlines has endorsed the Jamaat programme of establishing *Hukumat-e-Ilahi* (Kingdom of God) in Pakistan. It has also urged the Government not to lift the ban on the Communist Party and to outlaw any party which preaches socialism.

The spokesman of the Punjab landed aristocracy and chairman

of the Council Muslim League, Mian Mumtaz Daultana, has extended his hand of cooperation to Maudoodi in order to preserve the "glory of Islam" and root out "champions of socialism". Both Maudoodi and Daultana consider regionalism as "basically un-Islamic" and East Pakistan's demand of autonomy a sin, greater than the "one the Hindus of India committed against us".

In this powerful combination of the extreme Right, people like Wali Khan and Aslam have to make an extraordinary effort to be able to be heard. The obscurantist pressure is so intense that Bhutto now no more uses the word "socialism" and has taken recourse to an innocuous term "Musawat" (equality).

The consolidation of Rightist and chauvinist forces in West Pakistan will have adverse repercussions in the eastern wing. The change of political rivalry and confusion are considerably less in East Pakistan because of three important factors: (i) The two largest parties, NAP and the Awami League are Left-oriented and are motivated by a common aim—"liberate" East Pakistan from the domination of West Pakistan. (ii) Feudalism and religious dogmatism are confined to certain small pockets. They are not a major political force. (iii) The concentration of wealth in West Pakistan and the control of over East Pakistan's economy and industry by the West Pakistanis have compelled the political leaders to work for basic radical changes in the society.

Both Maulana Bhashani and Sheikh Mujibur Rehman symbolise Bengalee nationalism, but one is an extremist while the other is a moderate. Maulana Bhashani is a classical peasant leader with no inhibitions of a modern, sophisticated party manager. His politics is not power-oriented, and his main aim is social and economic revolution. Despite his flowing beard and faith in Islam, he is opposed to religious fanaticism and that is the reason for his crusade against the Jamaat-i-Islami and its adherents in East Pakistan. Maulana Maudoodi was not permitted to address

public meetings in Dacca and other towns, during his recent visit to East Pakistan, by the NAP youth leaders

But the Jamaat has gained some foothold, especially among emigrants from India, and Maulana Bhashani has decided to eradicate Maudoodi's influence by launching his own "Islamic cultural revolution".

Sheikh Mujibur Rehman remains Maulana Bhashani's main rival. He obviously cannot compete with him in his radical postures. The NAP's 11-point programme, which is in fact the manifesto of the militant student organisations, is a comprehensive "socialist" charter. Besides nationalisation of all means of production and establishment of socialist democracy, it demands Pakistan's withdrawal from defence pacts, shifting of the country's capital, military head quarters, and the National Defence College to Dacca. It also asks for the creation of subfederations of Baluchistan, NWFP and Sind

Bhashani's latest demand is the implementation of the Muslim League's 1940 Lahore resolution which envisaged the formation of separate States in the Muslim majority areas and not the Pakistan as it exists. This is perhaps in retaliation to those Urdu chauvinists, including Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman, who call Bengali an un-Islamic language. The demand is gaining momentum and might one day become a popular urge of the people of East Pakistan. The one East Pakistani leader who opposed it is Democratic Party President Nurul Amin. But he was hooted and chased out of a public meeting in Dacca.

Sheikh Mujibur Rehman has proved more tactful in his approach to the East-West Pakistan relations perhaps due to his desire to become a compromise candidate for the Prime Ministership. However, his six-point programme, if implemented in its entirety, would leave the Centre with only defence and foreign affairs. His demand for a separate currency and foreign exchange accounts is obviously aimed at building an independent economy for East Pakistan and prevent the flight of capital to

the western wing.

Capital worth about Rs 900 crores has been transferred to West Pakistan in the past ten years. This is bound to disrupt East Pakistan's economy and industrial life. It will also increase disparity since Dacca's share of the total foreign exchange aid worth Rs 2,900 crores has come to only 28 per cent. The transfer of capital has been estimated at Rs 45 crores every year and includes part of the foreign exchange allocations. The Sheikh, therefore, does not wish to precipitate the economic crisis.

To the charge of secessionism, he replies, "Why should the East Pakistanis, who are in a majority, secede from the mino-

rity, West Pakistan?"

He has been reluctant to forge an alliance with the extremist student leaders and declined to attend an all-party meeting convened by Maulana Bhashani at his village Santosh with a view to form a united front. He has, however, kept in touch with some of the Leftist politicians and intellectuals, especially the influential members of Bengal Academy and the newly formed Committee for the Preservation of the Rights of Writers. To the educated Bengalee youth, he is more than a politician. He is considered the initiator of an enlightened movement directed against injustice they have suffered in the past 20 years.

LAND REFORMS WHO WILL IMPLEMENT ? (Continued from page 14)

given the Indian Constitution and the composition of the United Front, that a provision of this kind in the law is not feasible. The only alternative then is to go ahead with popular implementation.

When the people "take the law into their own hands", which in less hostile language means, when they start acting as if the law is meant to be effective, then to some extent, excesses, disorder, killing and looting becomes inevitable. A small price to pay for the implementation of laws that not all the might of the Government of India could accomplish in two decades. And we have the testimony of the Union Home Minister, Sri Y.B. Chavan, that "a class struggle in the achievement of socialism was not avoidable." (*Indian Express* September 21, 1969)

Carrying through these reforms is not exactly socialism, but it shows that even to effect limited changes in the power structure means a class war and a bloody one at that in rural India. It then makes sense for the peasantry and the labourers to take the offensive in the struggle without waiting to prove once again that the law has failed.

Even if this particular struggle in Kerala fails to realise fully the benefits of the law for the people, it would still be valuable as a training in mass struggles. As one who should know it well,

said. "The real education of masses can never be separated from their independent political, and especially revolutionary, struggle. Only struggle educates the exploited class. Only struggle discloses to it the magnitude of its own power, widens its horizon, enhances its abilities, clarifies its mind, forges its will." (V I Lenin, *Lecture On The 1905 Revolution*)

Absolutely nothing new has been said here. From Marx to bourgeois academicians, many have repeated it. One gets the feeling of belabouring the obvious. And no doubt many of us accept this intellectually.

In the existing socio-economic structure, even when a perfectly sound law is enacted, the bureaucracy cannot implement it. The people, the under-privileged, who stand to gain immediately from the law, must do it. Then perhaps the bureaucracy and the courts can perform supportive functions. Yet, when confronted with a live situation, when the abstraction of "people's participation" or implementation means death and devastation and a paralysis of "normal" life, we cry "anarchy" and begin to doubt if there are not "better" alternatives. After all, the law is on our side. We are comfortable with rhetoric, militant and violent, but do we mean to be taken seriously?

HIGH DRAMA IN UTTAR PRADESH (Continued from page 10)

and meets Charan Singh in the afternoon as well as in the evening Charan Singh, according to reports, is unwilling to walk into Gupta's parlour.

BKD emissaries send feelers to Kamalapati Tripathi and Bahuguna to take a decision on the leadership issue before it is too late. These feelers are dismissed as mere "pressure tactics."

D P. Mishra, AICC Treasurer, after meeting Charan Singh comes away with the impression that even now the BKD leader can be weaned away from the Syndicate. He is offered leadership. Uma Bahuguna supports Mishra's offer. But Bahuguna stoutly refuses any commitment.

In the evening that Charan Singh resigned. The new Congress circles refuse to believe these rumours.

At 9-15 p.m. Gupta submits his resignation to the Governor which is accepted. He suggests that Charan Singh should be invited to form a government. The Indira Congress circles are bewildered. The Syndicate is jubilant.

February 11: Tripathi meets the Governor and stakes his claim as the leader of the largest single party to form a government. Bahuguna draws comfort that Gupta after all was forced to quit.

The Jana Sangh and the SSP give indications that they would support Charan Singh.

D P. Mishra prolongs his stay here. He establishes contacts with Charan Singh's aides. There are indications that Mishra has taken over charge as the sole negotiator to persuade Charan Singh to retrace his steps.

February 12: Arrival of B R Bhagat and his meeting with Charan Singh heightens the speculation that there is rethinking in both the BKD and the ruling Congress camps. D P. Mishra pursues relentlessly his mission to win over Charan Singh. Mishra keeps aloof from pressmen but it is now established that he is the main negotiator on behalf of the Prime Minister.

These are rumours that an

accord between the BKD and the Indira Congress is imminent. However, Tripathi, who addresses a crowded press conference at his residence, is silent on this issue though he throws a hint that in politics anything may happen.

February 13 Hectic political activity at Charan Singh's residence. There is regular correspondence between D P. Mishra and Charan Singh.

In the evening Mishra indicates that an accord has almost been reached and that a joint statement will be issued at night. It is now known that the ruling Congress has conceded leadership to Charan Singh.

However, the much awaited joint statement is not issued.

February 14 Charan Singh issues a statement in the afternoon virtually dissociating himself from the Syndicate. He says that he has not given any commitment to Gupta or any other.

Charan Singh does not favour abolition of land revenue.

In the evening, Charan Singh tells pressmen that the BKD Executive has authorised him to take any step he seems fit. He is bitter at the SSP attitude and bluntly tells that he "is not prepared to listen to abuses from the SSP leaders".

Late in the night, D P. Mishra announces that full accord has been reached between the BKD and the new Congress on the formation of an alternative government.

For the present, it will be a full-fledged BKD government backed by the ruling Congress, the CPI and others. Later, on the advice of Kamalapati Tripathi, the ruling Congress may join the government.

Mishra also reveals that BKD MPs will lend full support to the Indira Gandhi Government at the Centre.

February 15.

COURT'S VERDICT SOME FEATURES (Continued from page 12)

various components constituting an undertaking would really be a questioning of the adequacy which is banned by Article 31(2) of the Constitution.

To put it in his words "The entire undertaking is the subject-matter of acquisition and compensation is to be paid for the undertaking and not for each of the assets of the undertaking. If it be suggested that no compensation has been provided for any particular assets, that will be questioning adequacy of compensation because compensation has been provided for the entire undertaking. The compensation provided for the entire undertaking cannot be called illusory because in the present case principles have been laid down."

The dissenting view expressed above appears to be correct because, after the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution, it is permissible for the state to acquire property by paying compensation which would not be equal to the market value. Public purpose for which the property is thus acquired, justifies

such short payment. If Parliament is satisfied that the compensation provided is adequate, the consequences ought not to concern the court.

It is unfortunate, however, that the draftsmen of the Fourth Amendment chose the unhappy expression "compensation" which had earlier acquired a technical connotation. Nonetheless, the context of the amendment would amply indicate that the word compensation would not mean "just equivalent" as the judiciary had held in the earlier *Bela Banerjee* case.

The point does not call for much argument. If the words "just equivalent" are substituted for the word "compensation", the relevant portion of Article 31 would read as follows "No such law shall be called in question in any court on the ground that the just equivalent provided by the law is not adequate".

Needless to say, the judicial persistence in treating the word "compensation" as *nomen juris* has rendered the Fourth Amendment a nullity.

SSP's Sonapur Political Line

MADHU LIMAYE

I am somewhat surprised that while a journal like *Mainstream* can manage to publish within its columns a very fair report of the Jana Sangh Conference proceedings (*Mainstream*, January 10), the same journal should publish a story on the SSP's special convention at Sonapur (*Mainstream*, January 17), which is not only biased but full of deliberate misrepresentations.

If distortions in journals like the *Mainstream* attract criticism, it is not because of any so-called blind anti-Communism on our part but because this approach, we think, unnecessarily accentuates the present rift between the Communists and the Socialists and especially the SSP, and ruins the chances of future understanding which it should be the endeavour of Leftist journals to promote.

It is a sign of disintegration of the Party that the SSP's National Committee took 25 hours to evolve its political line after the momentous changes of the last few months or is it a sign of the vitality of the Party which permits serious and intense discussions characterised by determination further to strengthen and unify the Party?

It is not uncommon for other parties including the CPI to spend several months, not just hours, on finalising political resolutions. How long did the discussion and dissent on Czechoslovakia continue within the CPI? I favourably contrasted this serious discussion with the indecently hasty and opportunist support of the Soviet invasion by the CPM.

Our Party has always believed in the right of dissent and freedom of expression, I know that we carry things to an extreme,

and sometimes even members of the Committee express dissent from the Committee decisions without showing the decency of resigning from it before doing so.

Sri S. M. Joshi was, therefore, perfectly within his right in expressing his personal opinion that the Socialists should support the Prime Minister or that they should adopt what you call a "positive approach" to Smt Gandhi, both of which amount to the same thing. Sri Joshi has been saying this ever since the Presidential election.

But how is it that your "observer" failed to observe the very patent fact that not a single delegate spoke in support of the pro-Indira Gandhi line at the Sonapur Convention? Sri S. M. Joshi himself has modified his stand. He did not finally oppose conditional support to Sri C. B. Gupta's Government in Uttar Pradesh on programme basis.

Observer has accused me of having thrown my weight on the side of the pro-Syndicate line. But if he cares to read my first draft, published in the Party *Souvenir*, and compare it with the resolution as adopted by the Conference, he will see that all the essential points in my draft have been incorporated in the final version.

In fairness he should have mentioned that the condition of programmatic support is applicable not only to the so-called Right parties but also to the two Communist Parties, that I and my Party do not subscribe to the doctrine of negative anti-Communism or the policy of forming anti-Communist fronts. Why is he interested in dubbing people as enemies when in fact they are

not? We have always maintained that the slogan of anti-Communist front strengthens the ruling classes same as the bogey of Right Reaction bolsters up reactionaries in power. We have not sought to exclude the CPI; the CPI is excluding itself by aligning with the Indira Congress.

Observer asks why program-mism is not to be applied to Smt Gandhi's Government? I shall answer this question with absolute candour.

I make a vital distinction between the party which is in power in the States and *at the Centre* and the parties which are in power only in one State or a few States. The Centre has vast power and resources under our Constitutional arrangements and the tendency under the Congress Raj has been to stretch these powers to the utmost in order to establish the Centre's ascendancy over the States. I need not argue this point further as it is so obvious.

Reactionaries in power are a greater danger than reactionaries who have been thrown out of power.

Therefore, the main concern of popular, national parties must be to shake up and change the Centre.

With regard to other non-Congress parties, we never made participation in coalitions in individual States conditional on the partners' accepting the common programmes in other States also. But in view of the peculiar context of the Congress split and the position and strength of the Morarji-Kamaraj Congress, we have insisted on the implementation of the State programme in Mysore and Gujarat as a pre-condition of participation in U.P. We have also asked them to go beyond their 10-Point Programme and reach an agreement on the concrete and time-bound programme for the Central Government suggested in the Sonapur Convention.

Observer has not as yet accused me of being an agent of the Syndicate! I am grateful for this small mercy!

Everybody knows that when the Syndicate members and their allies were pillars of the Central Government and of the undivided

ruling party, nobody did more to attack and expose them than my leader and me. But I am not so stupid as to ignore the fact that they have now been reduced to the insignificant minority of 60 or so and that it is now the reactionaries of the Indira Congress and Indira Government who mainly represent the establishment which has brought the country on to the brink of ruin in the last 23 years.

After all, who wields the effective power of giving licences to monopoly houses, sanctioning loans and credits to them and conceding them big price increases? Smt Gandhi or Dr Ram Subhag Singh?

After the fine declarations at Bombay, Smt Gandhi presented the three big monopolists of this country with price increases and industrial licences. Hindustan Lever (which, if I am not wrong, controls 30 per cent of the Vanaspati production), Tata and Birla. If anybody wants to blow the trumpet of this Government let him please himself, but in view of the patent fact that most of the capitalists have jumped on the bandwagon of the Indira Congress, and in view of the fact that this party controls the Central Government, how can programmism be made applicable to the same Indira Congress at the State level in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar?

Observer has said that my draft was the basis of discussion and agreement could not be achieved on that basis. This is not true.

In fact, all the five drafts were read out and a general discussion was held not only on the drafts but on the new political situation. Later on, the Drafting Committee was appointed to produce a draft incorporating all the essential points brought out in the discussion.

In the draft placed before the National Committee and the draft placed before the Conference, there was not much difference except in regard to the expressions used in defining the Party's stand in regard to Bihar.

It is a pure concoction to say that the drafts differed with regard to the toppling of the

Central Government. In this respect, there was absolutely no change.

Nor is it true that the original draft had offered outright, unconditional support to Sri C.B. Gupta. The original draft also spoke of the support being conditional on his Government's agreeing to the State programme and also on the time-table for its implementation.

As I have stated above, it was only in regard to Bihar that the original draft was slightly modified.

The original draft had forbidden in so many words a coalition with the Indira Congress. It had, however, permitted acceptance of support from outside. The support portion was retained in a modified form. Significantly, however, the wider expression "cooperation", which includes participation and partnership, was not used in the revised draft as it would have opened the possibility of coalition with the Indira Congress. This was the only change made in the Drafting Committee's Resolution. The rest of the changes were of a non-controversial character and in the nature of elaboration.

The present controversy between journals like *Mainstream* and the SSP ultimately boils down to this: That while they consider the Indira Congress to be progressive or potentially progressive, the SSP sees no difference, in so far as ideology, policy and programme are concerned, between the Syndicate Congress and the Indira Congress. It considers them both as parties of bureaucratic capitalism, engaged in group rivalries and personality clashes.

The SSP's position is opposed to the *Mainstream* in this vital respect. The difference in the SSP's tactical line towards the two Congress arises mainly because of the fact that while the Indira Congress controls the Central Government at the national levels, the Syndicate Congress functions as an opposition.

In 1967, the Leftists, including the CPI did not consider the Muslim League or the Jana Sangh or the Akali Party as more "progressive" than the

undivided Congress. And yet while a party like the CPI was not prepared to enter into a coalition or partnership with the Congress party in the States, the force of circumstances drove it to enter into an alliance with these communal parties whom it considered to be more "reactionary" than the Congress.

The SSP on the other hand openly advocated the line of anti-Congress alliance and took the lead in evolving this tactical line.

The SSP and other Left parties were justified in doing so largely because these parties enjoyed office only at the State level and were relatively insignificant parties of the Opposition at the Centre.

But now the SSP is being attacked by journals like *Mainstream* for applying the same logic and reasoning to the present situation at the Centre which is characterised by the dominance of the Indira Congress. Had the position of Smt Gandhi been the reverse of what it is today and her group been sitting in the Opposition, there could be no doubt that the SSP would have proffered its hand of cooperation to the Indira Congress on the same basis and on the same terms in order to topple the Government controlled by the Syndicate Congress.

It would not be fanciful to imagine that, again, the pressure of events will first compel the CPM to change its tactical line at the Centre and the same developing situation will also compel the CPI to adopt the SSP line as it was compelled to accept the SSP line of all-out non-Congressism in 1967. Whether *Mainstream* would also ultimately shift its position, I cannot say. But I am encouraged by the strong criticism of Smt Gandhi's regressive moves like the Birla licence voiced in *Mainstream*. I am content to submit myself and my Party to the verdict of the developing popular movement, to the judgement of history; but meanwhile, why should journals like *Mainstream* strive to exacerbate the differences by distortions and misrepresentations? By now

it should be clear to all that the line of supporting the Indira Congress or the line of adopting a so-called positive attitude towards it, is a line which is completely out of tune with the dominant sentiment of the SSP workers at the grass roots level and that for the SSP rank and file it is unthinkable to support a Government which represents the

continuity of the Congress politics of the last 23 years. Only a thorough shake-up at the Centre will meet the requirements of the present situation and also the conditions of the SSP. Let me hope that not in the very distant future our viewpoints will converge again on this all-important issue

Observer's Reply

IN a vast country like India with innumerable problems all crying out for urgent solution, each party, its leadership, and its decisions intended to provide solution to those problems, are inevitably subjected to popular verdict. It is a continuing process.

Some in the parties take note of it for the good of the party, the people and the country. Others may ignore it or may take notice only of what suits them. Sri Madhu Limaye has offered to submit himself and his party to the verdict of developing popular movement or to the judgement of history.

In the context of the observations contained in 'SSP—Checkmate at Sonapur' (*Mainstream*, January 17) Sri Limaye is confident that the CPM under pressure of events will change its tactical line at the Centre and the CPI, compelled by the developing situation, will adopt the SSP's Sonapur line as it was compelled to accept the line of all out non-Congressism in 1967.

Observer will keep in mind this forecast by Sri Limaye while watching the future course of political developments. However, for the present, one can only say that Sri Limaye's forecasts have little relevance to the observations on the Sonapur SSP convention contained in the *Mainstream* article. The relevant point here is what happened at Sonapur.

Not only the General Election in 1967 but the United Front Ministries, their experiences, their disintegration followed by mid-term polls, the Jabalpur session

of the SSP, and the political convulsions before the Sonapur session, are all part of an eventful history in the light of which the contending groups at the Sonapur SSP conference put forward their respective lines.

Sri Limaye chooses to point only to 1967, while Sri S M Joshi had also taken into account what happened after that. It does not behove a leader of Sri Limaye's stature to remain stuck to the brief heyday of non-Congressism and ignore what followed in its wake in the various States. Such an approach has done little good and much harm to the party which was expected to contribute so much to the Left and progressive movement.

Even Sri Limaye would not say that Sri Joshi did not keep in view the lessons of recent history when he was projecting a line different from that of either Sri Raj Narain or Sri Limaye himself. Sri Joshi minced no words on this score at Sonapur.

One can recall two important aspects of the SSP's own recent life which appeared to weigh heavily with Sri Joshi. And for this one need not go out of the way to drag in other parties, at least Observer has no intention of doing so.

Take the question of socialist unity. At the Sonapur convention, all leaders without exception, and not only Sri Joshi, realised the need for such unity. And one may point out that Sri Joshi was virtually hauled over the coals at Jabalpur precisely for having

rejected at Jabalpur when Sri Limaye threw his weight behind Sri Raj Narain.

Sri Limaye then went to the extent of calling upon the SSP ranks to put an end to the "periodic itch" for socialist unity. What made Sri Limaye and Sri Raj Narain become overnight protagonists of a slogan which only a few months ago they had thought to be wrong? Only the SSP leader concerned can explain whether it is to them merely a tactical slogan or has become an integral part of their understanding now.

Another connected issue was that of building a militant mass democratic movement. Right from Jabalpur, and even before it, Sri Joshi had been fighting for building such an all-embracing movement in order to stem the political rot and resist Rightist machinations in the country.

As a result of the experience of the United Front Governments, particularly in the area where the SSP was strong, the Gaya conference had drawn up a massive plan for such a movement. It, however, evaporated into thin air. Despite admissions of failure on this score at Jabalpur, the leadership carefully kept to generalised slogans.

At Sonapur, once again call has been given for nation-wide mobilisation. Realising the weakness of the two Socialist parties, Sri Joshi had been pleading for Socialist unity in order to build it as a lever for rousing the masses to united action as the bedrock of the democratic movement. It was this healthy understanding of Sri Joshi, based on bitter experience of the United Front Ministries in Bihar and UP, that compelled him to turn his back on even temporary alliances with Rightist parties.

Contrary to this, the "topple" theory had led the party into opportunist alliances. Divorced from the mass democratic movement, for the militancy of its own style of which the SSP was once known, the party is now facing a deep crisis.

It was, therefore, not difficult to appreciate Sri Joshi's advocacy of a "positive approach" to Smt Indira Gandhi who had roused unprecedented mass expectations

fight against the entrenched Syndicate bosses in the Congress

There are, however, leaders in the Party who conveniently seek to make out Sri Joshi's line as "pro-Indira Gandhi". Probably this way it is easy to convince the SSP ranks who have been long fed on negativism. If observers listening to Sri Joshi, however, failed to get such an impression about him, it is not their fault. More about this Sri Joshi can say himself, he has said enough even in a recent article in *Mainstream*.

Pointing to such inconvenient facts is likely to be misunderstood sometimes in the heat of political developments. At Sonepur, Sri Limaye warned delegates and even some leaders against efforts of "so-called" progressive journals, including *Mainstream*, to boost one party leader against another with a view to splitting the party. The proceedings at Sonepur and the developments in the Party thereafter, show how unwarranted the "warning" was.

Sri Limaye has made much of the fact that not a single delegate spoke in favour of the pro-Indira Gandhi line. But it is equally a fact that a large chunk of delegates, including quite a few speakers, expressed serious concern at anti-Indiraism which appeared to lead the party into Rightist alliances, and more particularly into Sri C B Gupta's lap. These were the two sides of the Sonepur coin.

It is no doubt true that the SSP has been opposed to the formation of anti-Communist as well as anti-Rightist fronts. Despite this, the SSP repeatedly landed itself in Rightist alliances, while rapport between the SSP and the Leftists became the exception.

The point here again is not the professions or practice of the Party in general, but the performance at Sonepur. It is a fact that only Sri Limaye's draft echoed Jana Sangh views about the Communists. It was his draft which in the recent history of the SSP had chosen to term the CPI as "pro-Soviet and anti-national". It is not a case of taking lessons from history but borrowing from forces represented by the Syndicate and like-minded parties.

It was the logic of anti-Indiraism in the present period of growing realignment of forces which appeared to have led the SSP leadership into injecting a new element into its political weaponry. It did give the impression that the dominant party leadership has found anti-Communism, excluding the CPM from its attack for the time being, convenient tactics to beat the CPI with.

It is no doubt a welcome sign that Sri Limaye wants Leftist journals like *Mainstream* to endeavour to bridge the gulf between Communists and Socialists. Like *Mainstream*, Observer, too, thinks that these are the parties which can unite all the Left and progressive forces and lead the country to a brighter future.

But one cannot ignore the inherent contradiction between such a noble endeavour and the SSP's line of rejecting all talk about "Right" and "Left" or polarisation of political forces as merely something intended to provide props to Smt Gandhi's leadership.

Sri Limaye asks how program-mism can be made applicable to Indira Congress at the Centre or State levels? It is still less understandable how such programmism can be applied to the Syndicate, Swatantra or Jana Sangh, unless one is prepared to build castles in the air, or accept Syndicate's views about the changing face of the Jana Sangh.

Can the Socialist forces advance by aligning with those who had done their best to dampen and communally divide

the masses? Or, should they hope to advance towards the goal of transforming society by taking cognizance of the new situation—in bringing about which Smt Indira Gandhi, for whatever reason, did play a role—in which the aspirations of the people have touched a new high? Would it be creating illusions if the Left and progressive forces intervene to see that the country does not slip back into stagnation?

Nobody at Sonepur pleaded that Smt Indira Gandhi was a socialist. However, Sri Raj Narain did plead that the "erring Socialist", Sri C B Gupta, was again coming back to the right path, and it was Sri Raj Narain alone among the delegates who found Sri Limaye's exposition of the new line most heartening. This was a straw in the wind, if Sri Limaye had chosen to take the warning.

It is of little significance how much the original draft was amended or not amended. Those who knew how the compromise was reached at the Executive also knew how lopsided an explanation was given at the conference by the mover of the resolution, Sri Limaye.

Without going into the merits of the compromise, the latest developments in UP and Bihar, have revealed how the patchwork resolution has given rise to divergent interpretations. Thus, recent history has provided plenty of lessons for Sri Limaye and others who think like him. After benefiting from these he can think of facing the judgement of history later on.

Observer

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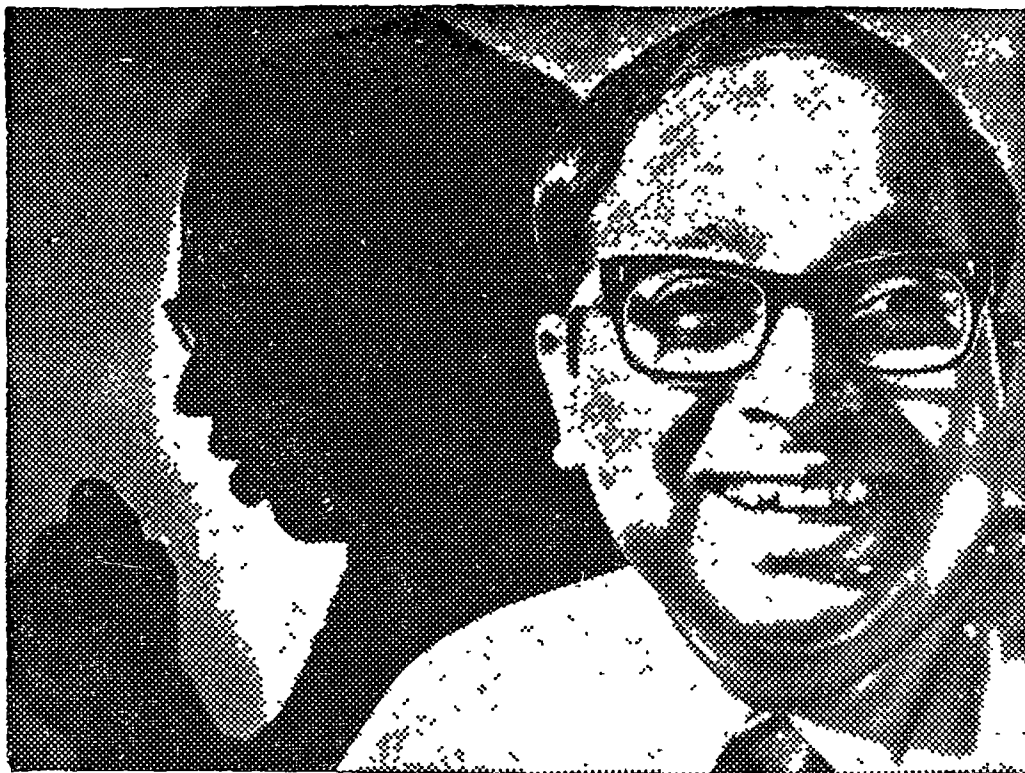
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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1970 35P

RAILWAY BUDGET

Old Engine for New Train

New Industrial Policy:
A Critique

A. K. Biswas

Budget and Economic Perspective

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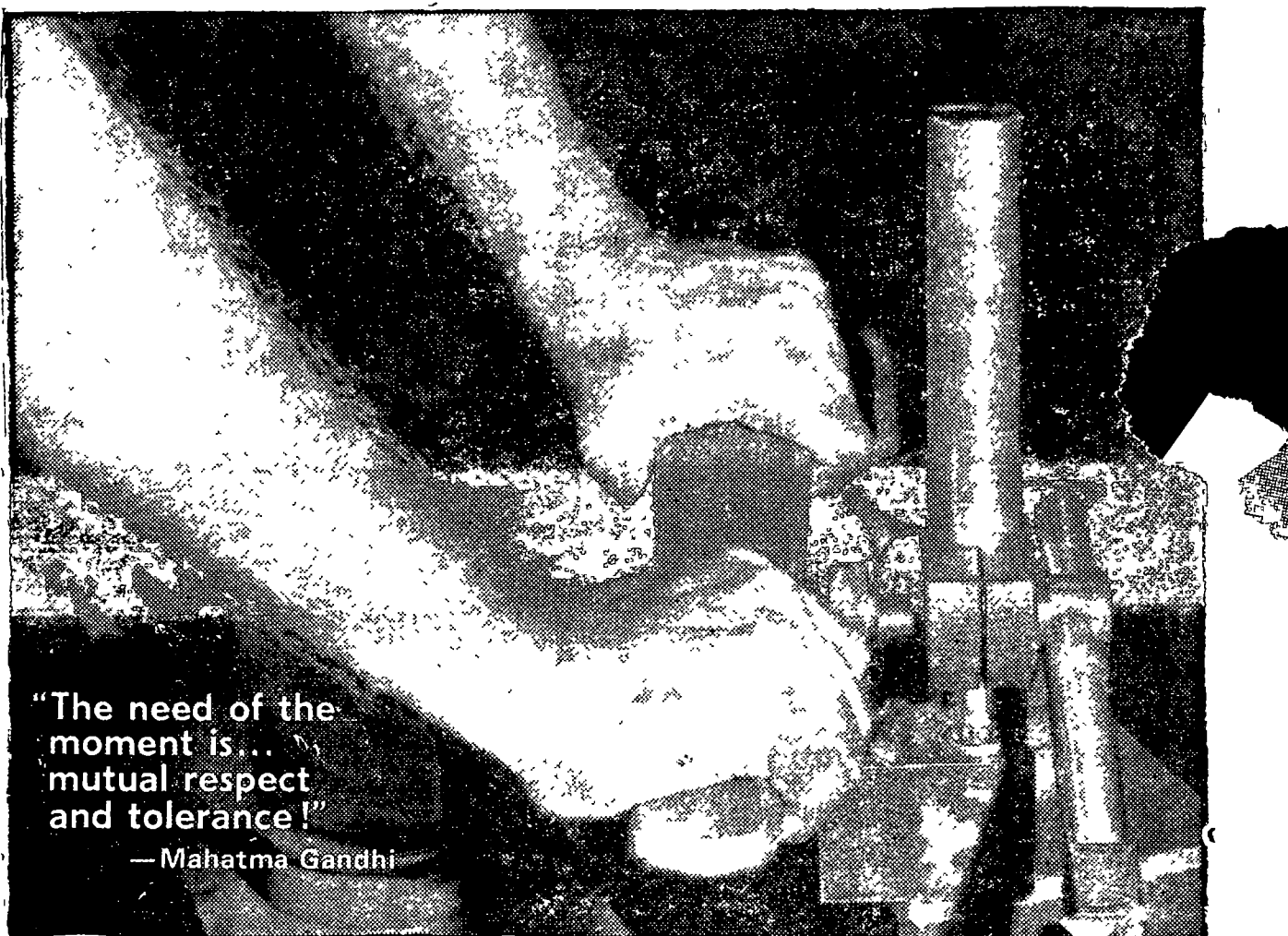


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Old Engine For New Train

THE poor and middle classes in this country are not unused to being called upon to bear more and more burdens year after year, and the pattern of fare and freight increases proposed by Railway Minister Gulzarilal Nanda is not very different from the one set over long years by an administration ready to tax the poor and reluctant to make the affluent pay in accordance with their capacity.

Yet the disappointment caused this year is more profound and widespread than in the past, because high expectations had been aroused among the people about the capacity of the Government at the Centre, after having got rid of the deadweight of the Syndicate, to respond to the popular mood and act in consonance with the people's requirements. Srimati Indira Gandhi and her colleagues had in recent months given the impression that a new orientation would be in evidence in respect of taxation policy and provision of amenities and facilities for the unprivileged sections of society. While the General Budget is anxiously awaited, the Railway Budget, with its proposals for heavy increase in third class fares and charges for the sleeper berth and in all types of freight rates—which latter will naturally lead to all-round price increases—has naturally caused the feeling that the Government's basic approach has not undergone much change, that the bureaucratic approach persists notwithstanding tall talk about equity and social justice.

Let it be clearly understood that the opposition to the proposed additional burdens is not based on failure to comprehend the need to raise new resources or merely on the technique of taking advantage of popular sentiment against inroads into the people's pockets. If there had been evidence of positive measures to provide relief to the poor and middle classes, of steps to reduce economic disparities in the rural and urban sectors, of willingness to impose heavy burdens on the richer sections, and of effective plans to raise the standard of living of the masses and eliminate unemployment and under-employment, there would have been infinitely less resistance to the imposition of new burdens. As things stand, however, the people have had the benefit only of slogans and promises, and have seen no evidence of action on these.

Even in the case of the Railway Budget proposals, all the clever jugglery with figures does not hide the basic fact that it is the third class passenger who is

called upon to pay heavily while the affluent sections travelling by the higher classes have got away lightly in comparative terms. It is not enough to say in justification that first class and other fares have undergone a bigger increase quantitatively; the fundamental question of who can afford to pay more and who cannot has been ignored, and the character of the Railways as a public utility meant to provide maximum service to the common people at the lowest possible cost has been altogether ignored.

It must also be noted that over the years, and again now, while fares have been pushed up steadily on one pretext or another, there has not been the least effort either to streamline the administration or to provide amenities to passengers commensurate with the increased amounts they have been called upon to pay. There have been complaints of wastage and inefficiency despite the vast increase in staff strength, but no one has so far cared to go into these aspects.

What the Central Government has particularly to take note of is the fact that political parties and

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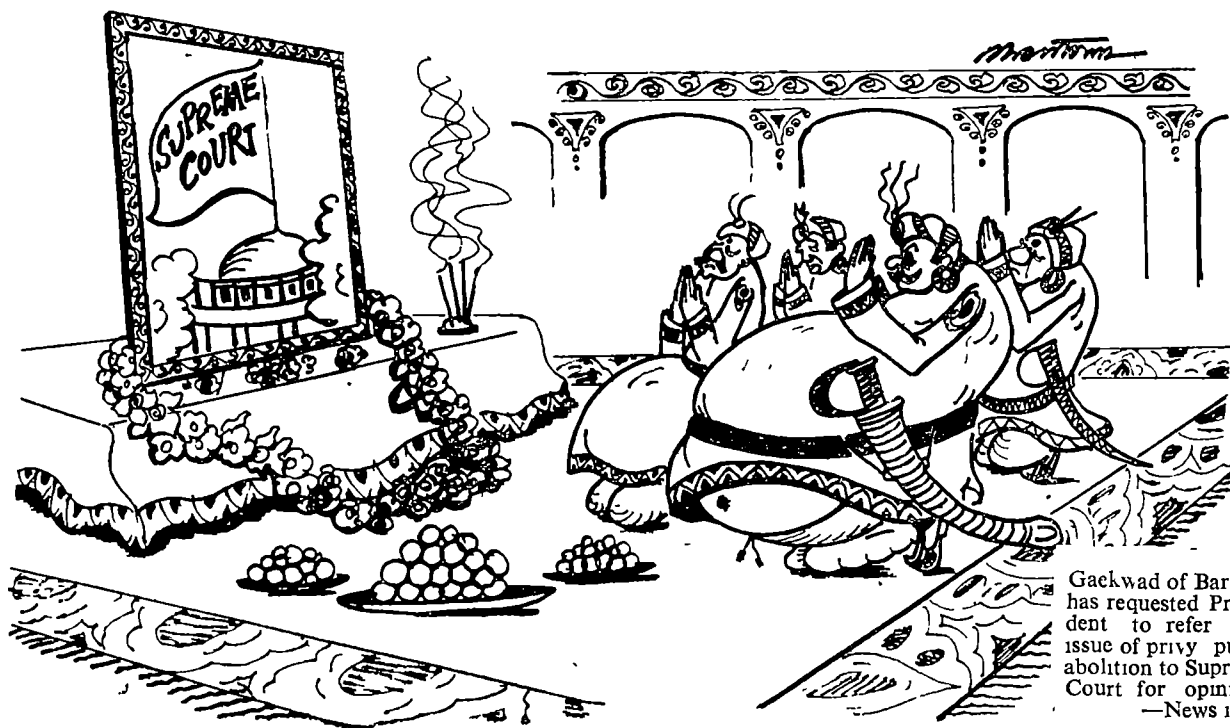
*Views expressed in the articles are those of the authors
and not necessarily of this journal*

sections of the people sympathetic to it in the new situation are being driven to opposing and fighting it by measures aimed against the common people. While no one will be impressed by the Syndicate's or the Swatantra Party's sudden concern for the common people, the criticism voiced against the the Railway Budget proposals by the parties of the Left cannot be brushed aside lightly. It is not merely a question of survival of the Indira Gandhi Government what is in fact involved is something much bigger and of much relevance to the future of India the question is, what is the direction in which the present Government, which has tried to demarcate itself from the parties of Right reaction, wants to take the country? If the Railway Budget is any indication, the economic direction of the Indira Gandhi Government of today is hardly different from that of the Indira Gandhi Government of yesterday when Sri Morarji Desai was a decisive figure in it. Final judgement can be pronounced only when the General Budget is scrutinised, but the trend indicated in Sri Nanda's hasty proposals—he presumably did no more than transmit the bureaucracy's formulations—is ominous.

To be acceptable to the people the Railway Budget proposals will have to be altered drastically. Fare increases in the case of third class passengers is totally unjustified, and those in respect of the upper class passengers is altogether inadequate. The Rs 8 25 crores which third class passengers are called upon

to bear can well be dropped completely, as such a step will only reduce the envisaged surplus of Rs 22.38 crores, and part of this amount can indeed be made up by a higher levy on the upper classes than has been proposed. The Government, and particularly persons like Sri Nanda, should realize that high-falutin' professions about Socialism and justice will not be taken seriously so long as the bias in favour of the well-to-do and against the poor persists in the field of decision-making. There is nothing dishonourable about admitting a mistake and recasting the Railway Budget to bring it in line with the lofty sentiments voiced at the Bombay session of the ruling party. In fact, to withdraw from a false and untenable position without standing on prestige considerations calls for high courage and honesty.

Once this is done, it will become easy to isolate the parties of the Right who are merely using the Budget proposals for their immediate purpose of trying to topple the Government by securing its defeat in the Lok Sabha the progressive parties by and large will stand by the Government if it shows itself capable of standing by the people concrete evidence of such an attitude can be provided by withdrawing the levies proposed in the Railway Budget on the weaker sections of society. The alternative is to give a convenient handle to the triple axis to mount an offensive exploiting popular discontent this should not happen, in the long-term interests of the nation.



Gaekwad of Baroda has requested President to refer the issue of privy purse abolition to Supreme Court for opinion
—News item

This week the Union Budget for 1970-71 will be presented in Lok Sabha by the time this issue of Mainstream reaches the reader. The present article by an eminent economist who is a Professor, in Delhi School of Economics, provides a perspective for discussion by clearly stating the minimum requirements for a Union Budget in India to be regarded as a step towards a radical economic order. In the coming weeks, Mainstream will carry contributions projecting a critical analysis of the Central Budget and the Government's economic policy.

Budget and Economic Perspective

A. K. BISWAS

QUITE a few of the objectives listed in the successive five-year plan documents of India appear to have a rather tenuous operational link with the structure of the Plans, and in consequence, a determined effort for resource mobilisation in general and on the fiscal front in particular to attain some of the objectives masquerading under the name of Socialist Pattern of Society has gone by default.

A primary tenet of operational planning is to establish a firm and meaningful correspondence between well-articulated goals and the instruments required to attain them. The failure of the Government to face these issues squarely will necessarily result in a very weak response to the economic and social challenges of the time. In many respects, we have created the impression of a "mystique" of planning which raises expectations without meeting them and creates fresh problems of social tension and unrest.

The objectives of economic policy posed as a Socialist Pattern of Society stress the importance of social gain in place of private profit, progressive reduction in the concentration of income, wealth and economic power in the hands of a privileged few, raising of living standards and the accrual of the benefits of development to the downtrodden and the poor. In the formulation of the Second Five Year Plan, the importance of basic industries in a country like India for achieving a high rate of self-sustained growth in the long run was explicitly recognised, and Prof Kaldor was invited to submit a report suggesting measures which could cope with the fiscal needs of such a programme.¹

Though some of Kaldor's proposals for tax reform have been incorporated in the subsequent budgets, the purpose has been frustrated by piecemeal and defective implementation and various types of escape clauses. Kaldor's proposals though limited to the field of direct taxation, form an organic whole, and call for significant changes in the administra-

tion of the tax machinery, and it is no use pretending that we could face the real challenge by sheer jargon-mongering without a commensurate effort on the fiscal front.

Kaldor's proposals were devised on the assumption that they were well within the constraints set by socio-economic and political considerations. It is necessary to appreciate that however much we talk about socialism and the laudable objectives it stands for, it remains a myth and is never a reality if considerations of feasibility on grounds other than economic in the framework of a democratic government are allowed to *dominate* our thinking. For, one can always argue that our efforts are always optimal in the sense that apart from sheer mistakes, they are fully explained by various explicit and implicit constraints. This is clearly the philosophy of non-action, and if we accept this, we have no business to delude the people—a vocation which appears to have a high pay-off in India where illiteracy is phenomenal and communication extremely poor. Nonetheless, this is an illusory pay-off and the short-term gain is only the premonition of a sure deluge.

I am not competent to assess the new developments in the political scene, nor is it possible for me to gauge the extent to which these will generate a determined and concerted effort on the economic front. As an economist, I can only stress the importance of the major premise, that if we want to attain the minimum objectives of a Socialist Pattern of Society, then we just cannot refer to any number of constraints and feasibility considerations of a non-economic character in a veiled attempt to make it an empty concept. We must believe that there are enough instruments within the framework of the Constitution to implement concrete measures which have an operational link with the basic objectives, and further, we must be prepared to act on the basis of this conviction. The provision of amendment of the Constitution must be resorted to, if some clauses stand in the way of the bold implementation of a Socialist programme.

¹N Kaldor, *Indian Tax Reform*, Ministry of Finance, Government of India.

II

OUR purpose here is a very limited one, though the issues I have raised have other ramifications. On the fiscal front, I have no doubt that the Kaldor proposals should be revived and implemented in the field of direct taxation. The fact that the Gift Tax and the Wealth Tax were introduced with various loopholes, and Personal Expenditure Tax, though introduced in a mutilated form, was abolished in 1962, is only an indication that the basic spirit in which Kaldor's tax proposals were made has suffered a drastic erosion, if not complete extinction.

Gift Tax The purpose of Kaldor's Gift Tax is to restrict the freedom of individuals to pass on their property rights to others. The long list of exemptions of the present Gift Tax (which has no counterpart in the Estate Duty Act) makes it possible for an owner of property through the mere process of spreading the gifts over time to reduce its incidence to a small fraction of that of the Estate Duty and to avoid the tax altogether. The purpose of the Gift Tax was to prevent the wholesale passing on of property through *inter vivos* gifts to avoid the Estate Duty. But the present tax fails to integrate gifts over successive years for tax purposes, and gives various exemption in addition to a high exemption limit and thus completely frustrates the purpose of such a tax.²

Personal Expenditure Tax Kaldor has given extremely cogent reasons for a Personal Expenditure Tax³, and it should be revived, not in its earlier form, but in the spirit in which it was conceived. Arguments in favour of a personal expenditure tax, though well known, may be briefly summarized at the cost of some repetition:

(a) Progressive taxation, if it is to be both effective and impartial cannot be levied beyond a certain point on an income base, but only on an expenditure base. In spite of the very high marginal rates of income taxation, its elasticity with respect to income is extremely low, which shows the tremendous magnitude of tax evasion. For, it is dubious to argue that incomes have accrued in favour of lower and middle income brackets and against the high income groups.

(b) A combination of property tax and expenditure tax makes it possible to restrict effectively the living standards of the rich, without sacrificing the egalitarian objective of a more even distribution of property.

(c) The administrative difficulty of handling an expenditure tax is no more than that of handling a comprehensive and effective system of income taxation.

(d) The obligation of a taxpayer to file a comprehensive return would make it easier to detect cases of income-tax evasion since they would automatically be reflected in an unduly low figure being retained for personal expenditure.

The most serious defect of the Expenditure Tax

when it was introduced was to tie it to a minimum income limit which provides the scope for endless manipulations and makes it largely ineffective in practice.⁴ Since income and expenditure are to be conceived as independent tax bases, the liability to one should not be made to depend on the liability to the other. Also the large number of exemptions which were allowed in the expenditure tax have no counterpart in income-tax, and there is no reason why people whose source of spending is capital as well as income be more leniently treated than those whose only source of spending is income. Only an undue concern for the propertied class explains the fact that necessitous consumption expenses of the rich are carefully looked after while those of the moderate spenders are not.

Wealth Tax Annual Wealth Tax was introduced in 1957 with an exemption limit of Rs 2 lakhs for an individual in contrast with Kaldor's suggestion that it should be Rs 1 lakh. The Wealth Tax on companies which was announced in 1957, was abolished in 1960. In the last Budget, a tax was imposed on agricultural property which was hitherto excluded from the purview of the Wealth Tax. We shall take up the problem of Wealth Tax on companies in connexion with the overall problem of company taxation.

Regarding Wealth Tax on agricultural property, the very high exemption limit, apart from considerations of equity, will ensure its abolition like the Personal Expenditure Tax if the mood in which the last Budget was framed persists for some time. There are convincing reasons in support of the proposition that agriculture is undertaxed and with the development of capitalist farming and the so-called green revolution, we have now a sizable number of substantial farmers who have not been brought under the tax net. The facilities enjoyed by these farmers by way of reaping the maximum gain from the high-yielding varieties and the continuance of favourable terms of trade for agriculture are out of all proportion to their actual tax liability. Though the effective imposition of taxes on agricultural income lies under the jurisdiction of the States, the constitutional right of the Union to tax agricultural wealth is now well established, and the exemption limit must be lowered to make it an effective tax measure. It is all the more compelling that agricultural property should be adequately taxed and be treated on par with other forms of wealth in view of the fact that most of the States have not implemented any effective scheme of agricultural income taxation.

III

Business and Company Taxation Kaldor⁵ had stressed on the need for a rationalisation of business and company taxation and this requires the reimposition of Personal Expenditure Tax in addition to the taxation of capital gains which was introduced a few years ago. Further, abolition

²N Kaldor, "Tax Reform in India", *Economic Weekly Annual*, January 1959

³N Kaldor, *Indian Tax Reform*, Chapter 4

⁴N Kaldor, "Tax Reform in India", *Ibid*

⁵N Kaldor, *Indian Tax Reform*, Chapters 7 and 8

of Wealth Tax on companies is wholly unwarranted. Considered as an alternative to a higher rate of profits taxation on companies, its economic effects are distinctly more favourable for it penalises firms who earn a low rate of profit and favours those whose earning powers are high.

The elastic definition of deductible expenses in the case of business and company profits must be replaced by the provision that they must be confined to expenses, wholly, exclusively and unavoidably in earning the profits of the year. There is a strong case for complete prohibition of a whole range of items which enter and are increasingly entering into the expense accounts of businesses and companies. A move was made in 1968 to curb lavish expenditure and tax evasion by business and profession by limiting the maximum deductible amount of entertainment expenditure to Rs 30,000 and by an extension of the clause allowing a maximum deductible expenditure on perquisites, benefits and amenities to higher paid employees of 20 per cent of the basic salary in the case of companies to non-corporate employees. These measures are not in any case sufficient to prevent avoidance of taxes on a large scale and I find no reason why there should be a discriminatory treatment in favour of business vis-a-vis employees. In the case of latter, deductible expenses are clearly defined as those which are "wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred in the performance of the duties of" the office or employment, and there is a compelling argument in favour of a clear-cut re-definition of deductible expenses in case of business, as mentioned above.

Further, in 1968-69 Budget proposals it was laid down that in computing the profits of the business or professions, no deduction will be allowed for business or professional payments to specified categories of persons (broadly the tax payer's relatives or associate concerns, directors and partners beyond limits considered reasonable on the basis of a number of criteria). This still leaves a good deal of scope of legal manoeuvres for those who want to avoid taxes and can never be a substitute for what may be regarded as an economic and rational definition of deductible expenses.

In this connection I would suggest that a tax on advertisements can be introduced, relating to a large range of commodities going into luxury consumption. If this results in a significant reduction in unnecessary advertisements, business profits liable to taxation are likely to record an increase on the other hand, in the absence of this, taxation of advertisements will ensure that this liability cannot be effectively avoided.

It appears to me that there is a strong case for a thoroughgoing review of business taxation together with the various fiscal and non-fiscal concessions enjoyed by them. Only an unwarranted dependence on the private sector explains the fact that the Government is scared by the bogey of capital market being threatened if any attempt is made to nationalise taxation on business. A motivated Government which means a Socialist Pattern of Society in deed rather than in slogans and catchy phrases, cannot take this hue and cry by the private sector as a very

serious issue, except for the genuine objective constraints in a phase of transition.

It is only proper to mention that this problem is intimately linked with a comprehensive review of the operation of the public-sector enterprises. Apart from the fact that the public-sector enterprises must generate enough surplus for financing development, the threat of the private sector against any rationalisation of business taxation poses a challenge which cannot be effectively met unless the public-sector enterprises are made to run on efficient lines. This is a problem which, I believe, must be given the utmost importance, not on the ground of fiscal considerations alone, but on the more fundamental ground of ensuring the viability of the Socialist Pattern of Society that we envisage. Needless to say a Socialist path of development where distributive justice is dissociated from concrete production goals, is operationally a vacuous concept and will lead to a retreat from planning and all that it stands for.

IV

Commodity Taxation Unlike in many other countries, indirect taxes play a relatively important role in the Indian fiscal machinery and they are much more income-elastic than the direct taxes. Since taxes on necessities are regressive, there is no escape from the fact that we have to bring a whole range of goods of luxury consumption under the net of commodity taxation and any measure in this direction is wholly justified. The only redeeming feature of the last Budget was the imposition of excise duties on a whole range of items which cater to the affluent section of the community, and it is necessary to explore fresh possibilities in this direction by having additional luxury items under the tax net and raising the levy on goods which enter into the consumption by top income brackets.

But the extent to which the device of commodity taxation can be used for financing economic development is necessarily limited, if we rule out the possibility of a very regressive system of taxation on articles of mass consumption. So there is no escape from reactivating the field of direct taxation on the lines suggested by Kaldor. This requires that Expenditure Tax must be introduced, loopholes and exemption clauses in the existing Gift Tax thoroughly modified, all forms of property included under the purview of the Wealth Tax (and as a specific measure, the exemption limit on agricultural wealth must be lowered) and the present procedure of company and business taxation reviewed and overhauled.

V

THE approach advocated for fiscal reforms calls for a radical change in the administration of the tax machinery.⁶

The onus of filling in comprehensive returns⁷ on the basis of which a whole range of direct taxes mentioned above are to be assessed and collected

⁶N Kaldor, *Indian Tax Reform*, Chapter 9

⁷N Kaldor, *Ibid*, Chapter 6

cannot be left exclusively to the individual taxpayers, nor can the system function if the genuine taxpayers are harassed at the other end by 'revenue officials'. The tax officials must serve the honest taxpayers and dispose of their cases quickly and their scarce time is better devoted to the scrutiny of fat accounts where the probability of tax avoidance and tax evasion is extremely high. The mutual checks against evasion, which is implied in Kaldor's proposals for a comprehensive return will be effective only if there is a thorough overhaul of the fiscal administration, imbued with a genuine spirit of service to the community. Now that some of the banks are nationalised, it is possible to create a department in these banks which will handle the clients' tax matters, if necessary, on the basis of a reasonable charge. But at the same time, it is to be seen that this device is used for the service of bonafide taxpayers so that the procedures are not unnecessarily duplicated when the relevant documents are presented to the higher authorities.

Under the Indian law, property can be registered in the name of a nominee, called *benamidar*, without declaring the beneficial owner who, however, can protect his rights by keeping the deed of property in his possession. As Kaldor suggested, the system of compulsory disclosure of *benami* holdings must be enforced, on penalty of the tax liability falling on the *benamidar*, and the system of blank transfers of shares must be abolished.

The other suggestions made by Kaldor are

(a) Owners of Government securities must be registered with the Reserve Bank and any change in ownership must be registered,

(b) A Central Record Office must be set up for the listing and valuation of urban property on an all-India basis, and

(c) A Central Valuation Department under the CBR with regional and sub-regional offices should be established for the purpose of valuation of property and for effective administration of the Wealth Tax.

It has not been possible within the limited scope

of this paper to go into the broader aspects of resource mobilisation for the purpose of development. The problems of resource mobilisation and fiscal policy require to be considered for the States as well for a fuller treatment of the issues involved. For obvious reasons, this could not be attempted here.

There is good reason to suppose that an effective scheme of reforms requires a detailed analysis and planning of the current and the capital expenditures of the Union and the State Governments. For, the potentialities thrown up by any scheme of reforms may be frittered away by injudicious planning on the expenditure side. It is necessary to curb the unnecessary and highly demonstrative expenditure on the part of the Government, austerity on the part of the people must be matched by austerity on the part of the Government. In a society where the administrative machinery is geared to the emulation of the pomp and extravagance of advanced Western economies the Government cannot expect that the people will respond to its call for austerity and be prepared to make the necessary sacrifice for development. But this is a problem which requires a critical assessment of the Fourth Plan and the Plan strategy in the years to come, and quite clearly, it is not possible to cope with these problems in this brief paper. The revision of our fiscal policy by way of a revival of Kaldor's proposals is apart from considerations of equity, geared to serve the twin ends of mobilising resources for capital formation for basic industries and essential consumer goods on the one hand, and a progressive reduction in the concentration of property and economic power in the hands of a privileged class on the other. And we cannot fight shy of this primary commitment by a failure to make some minimal effort in this direction.

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New Industrial Policy

M. D. NALAPAT

THIS is a country where planning proceeds chiefly by way of exhortation. Targets are published, financial outlays are decided upon, and no mention is made as to the *organization* of the expenditure and the *path* necessary to achieve the stated targets.

Quite naturally, there is often a considerable shortfall, sometime before which (and in anticipation of which) the targets are revised downward, so as to minimise the shortfall between target and achievement. This is nothing but planned hypocrisy.

Defects Revealed

Such an attitude extends to the industrial field as well. Every now and then in a way we are treated to a new "policy" which will achieve all that we have been enjoined to do in the Directive Principles of the Constitution, namely, the securing of a just social order, provision of an adequate means of livelihood, absence of exploitation of labour *et hoc genus omne*.

At first glance, the "new" policy would appear to work towards these principles fairly well. It is only after closer examination that the defects and the loopholes stand revealed and the "new" policy is found to be no improvement at all, which is hardly surprising. Because ultimately it is the composition of the Government which will colour the entire policy.

If the Government is poor, if it is composed of elements willing to let the national interest go hang to satisfy their selfishness, no industrial policy, howsoever expertly thought up, can

succeed, and much less a badly thought-up policy. This fundamental restriction ought to be borne in mind when considering any discussion of the new policy.

New Policy—Main Features
The chief innovations of the recently announced New Industrial Policy (hereinafter abbreviated to NIP) are:

(a) "Industries" involving an outlay of one crore rupees or less stand delicensed.

(b) The "core sector" of industry will consist of (1) Fertilisers, nitrogenous and phosphatic, pesticides (basic chemicals only) tractors and power tillers, rock phosphate and pyrites; (2) Iron ore, pig iron and steel, and alloy and special steels, (3) Oil exploration and production, petroleum refining and selected petrochemicals (integrated petrochemicals complexes), DMT, caprolactum, acrylonitrile and synthetic rubber, (4) Heavy industrial machinery, shipbuilding and dredgers, newsprint, electronics (selected components testing and control equipment, wireless and microwave equipment).

Large Houses

This list does not include those industries listed in Schedule A of the 1956 Industrial Policy Resolution and which too are to be treated as belonging to the "core".

The large houses will be freely permitted to set up new industries in this sector except if the field of production be exclusively reserved for the state. In the case of the other sector, where investment will be between one to five crore rupees, *large units will be permitted*

to expand "to achieve an economic scale of production". And the judge of what an efficient scale of production is, will, of course, be the Government of India.

(c) Eight industries have been reserved for the small sector. A small enterprise is defined as one having capital assets not exceeding Rs 7.5 lakhs.

(d) Both the cooperative as well as the public sector are to be allowed to expand, the latter even into inessential lines of production.

(e) The Government have accepted the need for a "joint sector" in industry.

Capital Invested or Ownership?
It is time to have a closer examples of innovations (a) to (e).

First, the principle of using *capital invested* rather than *dispersal of ownership* to judge what firms should be restricted is a bad one.

In India a primary defect of our industrial structure is that for any one firm or group of firms the dispersal of ownership is slight. The company or group is often controlled by a few key stockholders or families, and it is this which we must discourage.

Rather than lift licensing wholly from the under Rs one crore sector, I would suggest that (a) all firms involving a capital investment of 25 lakhs or less be exempted, and (b) in the case of firms with capitals investment of over Rs 25 lakhs but not exceeding Rs 1 crore, all firms where *no one person* controls more than (say) 5 or 10 per cent of the ownership rights should be delicensed.

In fact, I would suggest a delicensing of *all* firms with assets below or equal to Rs 5 crores, the delicensing being based on a sliding scale of ownership dispersal, that is, for industries of under Rs 25 lakhs no licence is necessary, for industries with investment between Rs 25 lakhs and Rs 1 crore no licence is needed, *provided* no one man controls over 10 per cent of the ownership rights.

For those industries involving an outlay of between Rs 1 crore and Rs 2.5 crores no licence is needed, *provided* no one man

controls over five per cent of the ownership rights. Where industries involve a capital outlay of between Rs 2.5 crores and Rs 5 crores, no licence is needed, provided no one person controls over 2.5 per cent of the ownership rights of the company.

Positive Check

I feel that this method would be preferable for the one announced by Government because of the *positive* check it would exercise on economic concentration of power.

As for the large industrial houses, special facilities could be given to those which prove that no one person controls over one per cent of the ownership rights of the company, a "person" being defined as being a man *plus* his wife *plus* his non-adult children.

The agency acting as a watchdog over all this, to see that the provisions be fully complied with and that no fraud is committed, would of course be the proposed Monopolies Commission.

Core Sector A good reason why the NIP will not result in a lessening of the hold of the larger houses over our economy is that they have been given full freedom to participate in the core sector (subject to the restriction mentioned above, that of excluding all except state agencies from any one particular sector) and it is the industrialists of this sector who are the captains of industry, controlling and overawing their less fortunate brethren.

The recent experiences first with the steel and then with the old companies have revealed one thing where there exists a virtual cartel of producers, Government finds its powers substantially reduced, whereas when the sector consists of large but *independent* companies, it is easier to apply pressure.

It should be our endeavour, therefore, to promote large independent *firms* in those sectors where substantial economies of scale are possible, even while discouraging the growth of *business houses* controlling a large number of big firms.

The NIP does not seem to have anything to say on this important

matter. In fact, the NIP states these houses (because active in the core sector) will be given full assistance on a priority basis. I feel that now is the time to differentiate between large *firms* and large *houses*, and discriminate against the latter while encouraging the growth of the former in selected fields.

I am also unhappy at the substantial list of industries exclusively reserved for the public sector. I can do no better than quote Professor Sir W. Arthur Lewis, one of today's great economists and a socialist: "There is case for having some private firms in industries mainly nationalised, to act as a check on the efficiency of the public firms, and to provide an outlet for the ideas which the public firms might suppress (this is particularly important in a country dependent on foreign trade). And equally there is a good case for public firms in many industries that are largely in private hands. . . Partial nationalisation has many advantages over complete nationalisation of an industry."

Priority Assistance

I am assuming, of course, that the firms will be independent of each other and will not cartelise themselves as has happened in steel.

Co-operative Capitalism The co-operative as well as the "small industry" sector are to be given priority and aid, chiefly through the rather negative exclusion principle.

I for one have totally failed, after an examination of the working of the cooperative sector in India, to see why so many so-called socialists swear by this sector. Cooperation in practice has often been either cooperation only in name or else cooperation for exploitation—what Prof D.S. Namjoshi (to whom I owe this useful phrase) terms as "cooperative capitalism."

It is true that agricultural processing (though not agro-industries generally) is a field where cooperatives could do good work, but care must be taken to see that these cooperatives are set up by the truly

weaker sections of society or at least predominantly by them, and they do not become the privileged menace the Maharashtra sugar cooperatives have degenerated into.

The cooperatives, if properly constituted and run, can easily hold their own in several sectors, and I dislike the state specially supporting this virbrant form of organization for no reason whatsoever, and thus abetting in its corruption.

Damnable Part

As for the small industrial sector, if this field is such that small units can *efficiently* produce and compete in it, it would not be a bad idea to impose curbs on larger units, to prevent pre-emption of capacity. But the above restriction must always be borne in mind, otherwise we are in for a spree of subsidies and waste.

The most damnable part of the NIP relates to the expansion of the public sector into messential fields. When resources are tight, one obviously concentrates attention on the important sectors such as basic industries, drugs, etcetera. But now the state wants to squander its resources making (say) ribbons, lipsticks and toys!

Let the state bother less about "quick" returns (these are amply possible—as the Shipping Corporation has for some extent shown—if efficient men are placed in command of public units) and more about our long-term industrial health. The attempt to gatecrash into the messential goods sector (and thus add to the flow of resources being wasted there), is opportunist and myopic in the extreme.

Joint Sector It would be an excellent idea if Government were to nominate a few chosen men to keep watch over the operations of the larger houses directly, through participation in the boards of companies controlled by these houses. But this is so only if (a) the Government and the larger houses do not act in collusion, and (b) the men nominated by Government are of the right type.

(Continued on page 30)

Andhra Land Reforms : The Achilles' Heel

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

AFTER the recent note of the Union Home Ministry on the slow pace of implementation of agrarian reforms and the consequent agrarian unrest in the country, there is no need to argue at length about the failure of the different State Governments in implementing the much-needed land reforms.

But still, the Andhra Chief Minister Sri Brahmananda Reddy has claimed that all aspects of land reforms have been implemented so far as Andhra Pradesh is concerned, and only minor things like the fixation of tenancy and temple inams remain to be dealt with. He has announced on the floor of the Assembly that the Government proposes to fix the tenancy rates soon.

Both of them cannot be true. Either the Union Home Ministry's assessment does not apply to Andhra or the Andhra Chief Minister is making false claims. The subject needs to be examined carefully.

It is true there was an Andhra legislation imposing ceilings on land holdings enacted in 1961. But only 89,000 acres were declared as surplus land over the ceiling, which accounts for a little over 0.2 per cent of the total cultivated area. Distribution of even this amount of land has not been taken up till today for want of funds to pay compensation.

There was also a legislation to protect tenants and regulate their rent, but more tenants were evicted in this period than ever before. The rent payable by the tenants is still on the high side.

True, the Government has announced a crash programme to distribute cultivable waste lands to be completed before the end of March this year, but it has left out of the distribution scheme as much land as it proposed to distribute.

The very fact that agrarian unrest is growing, rural tensions are on the increase, armed clashes take place often, as in Srikakulam, demonstrations continue to be staged and Harijans are murdered in the villages over land disputes, prove beyond doubt the insufficient, defective, and faulty implementation of the laws on land reforms in Andhra Pradesh and the continued stranglehold of the big landholders on the rural life. The advent of the Panchayat Raj in the State has made the situation worse in the rural areas, since those very elements with an economic hold in the villages have been endowed with political power as well through this system.

The rural unrest has reached the high-water mark of armed clashes in Srikakulam district, and as the

Union Home Ministry's note on current agrarian unrest has said "The basic cause of unrest, namely, the defective implementation of laws enacted to protect the interests of the tribals, remains; unless this is attended to, it would not be possible to win the confidence of the tribals whose leadership has been taken over by the extremists." About the defective implementation in general, the Report has this to say "The tensions in the rural areas, resulting from the widening gap between the relatively few affluent farmers and the large body of small landholders, landless agricultural workers, may increase in the coming months and years. A bad agricultural season could lead to an explosive situation in the rural areas."

Ceiling Laws

Let us first take the land ceiling legislation and examine it.

First, the Ceiling Act did not even make a mention in even one of the twenty clauses that the Government would distribute the surplus land above the ceiling to the landless and poor, let alone saying that it would break the monopoly stranglehold of big landholders over land.

Secondly, the Act itself placed the ceiling as high as 72 acres of wet and 432 acres of dry land. What surplus land can one expect as a result of such high ceilings?

A family holding has been fixed at six to twelve acres wet land, depending on the fertility of land, and ceiling is placed at six times the family holding including allowance for grasslands. Since each individual in the family can be termed as a family under the Succession Act, ceiling for a five-member family comes to 180 to 360 acres wet. In terms of dry land, it can be anywhere between 1080 to 2160 acres! All temple lands, lands under sugarcane, coffee, tea, rubber, and plantations attached to factories were exempted from the ceiling. For instance, a two-thousand-acre sugarcane plantation of Rajah of Challapalli (a Congress MLA) does not come under the purview of the ceiling at all.

This kind of ceiling legislation was enacted seven years after an advance notice was given by the Revenue Minister who, in a seemingly innocuous notification, asked all the big landholders to declare their land above 20 acres. It was enough indication for the landholders to divide their land among the

members of their family, near relatives and even among the unborn children to escape the proposed ceiling

A study sponsored by the Research Programme Committee of the Planning Commission said the following about Andhra land reforms "The goals are not clear, there are no targets. Exemptions are too many. There was considerable delay between the proposal and enactment. The loopholes in the Act, combined with considerable delay in implementation, resulted in massive mala-fide transfers in the form of spurious partitions among family members. The cumulative causation was in the reverse direction defeating the very purpose of the legislation."

What can one say of a Chief Minister who, after imposing such an "ineffectual" ceiling, announces that he has finished the task of breaking the monopoly hold over land in rural areas in his state?

Is there no land other than the cultivable wasteland for distribution among the landless and the poor to remove the land hunger, release productive forces, restore balances, bridge the gap between the poor and the rich, and bring peace to the rural areas? There is no other land available if we are to believe the State Government and depend on the present ceiling legislation. But this is not true there is a lot of surplus land available for distribution, if only the intentions are sincere.

According to State Government's statistics collected in 1953, there are 143,330 holdings above ten standard acres, accounting for a total area of 2,931,191 acres. If a ceiling is imposed at ten standard acres, as much as 1,487,853 standard acres will become available for distribution to the landless, even if the ceiling is imposed at 20 standard acres, the excess land would come to 734,054 standard acres. Lakhs of landless and the poor can then be given land. This is so far as the Andhra region of the State is concerned.

Tenancy Legislations

The statistics for the Telangana region, published a few years ago, place the total number of holdings in the region at 1,597,635 covering an area of 25,167,607 converted dry acres. Of this, the holdings above two family holdings number 34,266 accounting for 6,367,616 acres of dry land. A ceiling imposed at 30 acres of unirrigated land will leave an excess of 53 lakh acres. Ten lakh landless and poor people can be given land at the rate of five acres of dry land. (All figures for Telangana are converted dry acres.)

Let us now have a look at the tenancy legislations in the State. Tenancies are regulated under separate laws in the two regions of the State.

The Telangana legislation, enacted under the impact of the peasants' uprising in the area, in the fifties, provides for (i) fixation of rent at one-fourth of the gross produce for irrigated lands and one-fifth in other cases, (ii) fixity of tenure for protected tenants, subject to the landlord's right to resume land for personal cultivation up to three family holdings, and (iii) an optional right of purchase of ownership of non-resumable lands by protected tenants, subject

to a limit of one family-holdings (varying from four to sixty acres)

A protected tenant is defined as one who was in continuous cultivation of the land for six years prior to 1948. It is interesting to know how this legislation, hailed as Magna Carta for the farmers in those days, was implemented.

According to the Special officer for land reforms in the then Hyderabad State, 57 per cent of the protected tenants have been evicted from their lands within four years of the enactment of the legislation. The land that passed out of the hands of the protected tenants constituted 59 per cent of the total land under tenancy.

One can imagine the difficulties of a tenant to prove his tenancy for six years prior to 1948, when the State was under the feudal regime of the Nizam. There was a peasant upheaval against the Nizam's oppressive rule just before 1948 in which all land records were consigned to the flames in the fury of the struggle. Since then, no proper land records have been maintained. Presuming that the tenant had somehow established his continued tenancy, his trials would not come to an end and he would not be declared as an owner unless the Government published a date from which they would be deemed to have become owners. The Government took 16 years to publish this date!

An evaluation report of the Planning Commission in 1965 pointed out several gaps in the Telangana law (a) "Ordinary tenants do not enjoy the rights given to protected tenants. The number 1.34 lakhs and occupy an area of 8.58 lakh acres. Protected tenants number 2.99 lakhs and hold 16.57 lakh acres", (b) "tenants' right to ownership is much limited in scope as the bulk of the leased area is comprised within the two family holdings to be left with the owner"; and (c) "surrenders are not properly regulated".

Again, according to Dr Khusro, "a significant degree of evasion is noticeable with reference to tenancy legislation. It appears that out of the originally created protected tenants in 1951, only 45 per cent still remain to enjoy their protected status, while 12 per cent have purchased their lands and have become owner-cultivators, thus fulfilling the intention of the law. 25 per cent have been legally evicted, 22 per cent having been illegally evicted, while 17 per cent have voluntarily surrendered. The so-called voluntary surrenders are more often a suitable form of illegal eviction and only a portion of these surrenders is genuine."

The legislation obtaining in the Andhra region (The Andhra Tenancy Act, 1956) is only of an interim nature, providing for stay of ejectments and fixation of rents high as 50 per cent of gross produce for irrigated lands, 28½ per cent for land irrigated by bailing, and 45 per cent for dry lands.

In 1960, the State Government introduced a new Bill providing for a unified tenancy for the whole State. The Bill lapsed in 1961 due to the dissolution of the Assembly on the eve of general elections, and a fresh Bill, introduced later in 1962, was referred to a joint Select Committee. Its report said that the provisions of the Bill were deficient in several respects. The Regional committee for Telangana

area had disagreed with the Bill and had suggested that the Hyderabad Act should be extended to the Andhra area also. The report was allowed to die its natural death with the dissolution of the Assembly again.

It was only a few days ago that the Chief Minister announced in the State Assembly that the State Government proposed to bring forward an integrated legislation fixing the rent at 25 per cent in respect of wet and 20 per cent in respect of other lands. A similar announcement was made about a month ago. But, no tenancy legislation is on the agenda of the current budget session, which means, it can be brought forward only some time in July-August session, and will have to be referred to a joint Select Committee. Nobody knows when it will become a legislation and whether any tenant will be left to seek protection under its provisions.

The sharp drop in the percentage of tenants is quite evidently, the result of the strenuous efforts made by the landlords to evict their tenants during the last fifteen years.

A study sponsored by the Research Programme Committee of the Planning Committee reports: "The legislation has allowed unrestricted termination of such of those tenants who seek to assert their rights defined in the legislation. Even bold tenants cannot establish their rights in the absence of recorded evidence as to tenant-landlord relationship. Thus, this piece of legislation has made tenants in general apathetic towards the rights conferred on them. On the other hand, landlords could evict tenants with ease for even minor delays in payments of rents. Evictions were on a large scale. Absence of record of rights and of machinery to scrutinize, made the task of the courts difficult to establish tenant-landlord relationship even when some tenants braved to fight in the courts. Thus, the provisions were rendered ineffective and the desired change was not achieved."

According to the statistics collected for the same study, 80 per cent of the tenants who had gone to the courts, had lost their cases. "It appears that the courts have helped to evict the tenants on a larger scale when the legislation created them to protect their rights. The courts in Andhra region rarely showed an understanding of spirit of the legislation."

In the delta areas, one estimate shows that nearly one-fifth of the tenancies of 1954-55 were completely terminated. In terms of plots and area, the proportion was much larger. The resumptions led only to change of tenants and not to genuine personal cultivation by the owner. The legislation has thus proved quite ineffective in preventing evictions.

The less said the better about implementation of the rent fixed by the legislation. Even the higher rate of fair rent provided in the law in the Andhra region is not observed, according to Dr Wolfe Ladejnsky, the noted US expert. For canal and tank irrigated paddy rent under legislation was 50 per cent of the gross produce, while the actual rent was 73 per cent. While protected tenants had some chance of paying the fixed rent in the Telangana region, the case of non-protected tenants even here was no different from those of the Andhra region.

Rents obtaining in practice are far higher than those fixed under legislation.

Let alone any land reform, even a simple thing like maintenance of proper records of rights was more abused than implemented. The *patels* and *patwaris* in the Telangana region and the *karnams* and *Munsiffs* in the Andhra region are themselves big landlords or act as their henchmen. The State Government has been promising a passbook for the farmer giving information about the extent of land he owns, the tax he has to pay, and so on. Even such a minor reform is being postponed year after year is a proof of the stranglehold of vested interests on the Government and the administration.

The problem of distribution of wasteland has a chequered history. Way back during the Second World War, the British Government had allowed landless people to occupy Government wastelands with a view to grow more food. Since then, poor and landless peasants have been cultivating these lands, paying nominal penalties during the British period, and exorbitant penalties after Independence. Attachment to land was such that they sweated and laboured for years with their scanty means to bring them under cultivation.

But they had many forces to contend with. Since they had no right on that land, which was entered as Government land in the village records, these poor people were totally dependent on the mercy of the village *Karnam* and *Munsiff*, in addition to undergoing the exploitation of the local landlords. These wastelands were often alongside the cultivable lands of big landholders who waited till they were brought under cultivation and then, by hook or by crook, grabbed them.

As if these two forces were not enough, the Congress Government had introduced a third force, namely, the "political sufferers", in whose hands also these poor people had to suffer. Political sufferers are those who had been to prison in the national struggle and were certified by the Pradesh Congress Committee as such. These "sufferers" selected lands which were brought under cultivation by the poor and landless peasants, and the State Government, in turn, allotted them to the new claimants, evicting the poor since they were in "illegal" occupation of these lands.

As early as in 1954, during the Prakasam Ministry the Andhra Assembly had unanimously adopted a non-official resolution urging the Government to distribute the wasteland to the poor. But the Congress Government kept it in cold storage, without showing the slightest intention to implement it.

However, the agitation for the distribution of Government wasteland continued and special staff was appointed year after year by the State Government to expedite the distribution and issue of title deeds. As the landless peasants occupied some of these wastelands, the landlords also occupied hundreds of acres, some of them being top Congress leaders and even Ministers. Simultaneously with the Government's show of activity to distribute more and more land, the big landholders, who were in possession of hundreds of acres of such lands, also got

active, and some of the incidents during the last two or three years, involving murders and attacks on the Harijans, could be attributed to these "activities".

According to the announcement of the Chief Minister, 14 lakh acres have already been distributed, leaving only eight more lakh acres to be given away. This is only half the truth. There are lakhs of acres of what is called the forest land, on which not even a shrub grows, but are situated on the outskirts of the plains. Moreover, there are thousands of acres which are likely to come under some project either under construction or proposed to be constructed. There are also lands which are called "community lands" in Telangana region in every village to the extent of five per cent of the total land in every village, but which, in fact, are in possession of the vocal sections of the village society. Thus, according to one estimate, there are 40 lakh acres of available land fit for distribution, as against just 22 lakh acres calculated by the Chief Minister.

There is also a catch in the manner of categorising the lands available for distribution. All those who occupied the available wastelands in a village are divided into the eligible and non-eligible. This is nothing but an attempt to create a rift among the rural poor, trying to set one group against the other. Almost the very first step assigned to the revenue officials was "to evict all ineligible" occupants. "Even in cases where there are standing crops raised by the *Sivajamadars* (occupants), the eviction shall be carried out without waiting for their harvest. The standing crops in such cases should be confiscated to Government," such are the instructions. This one step alone takes off the garb of socialism from this measure. This power will be used to achieve the political ends of the vested interests.

The lands available for distribution will be given away on the "advice" of a Village Assignment Committee composed of the *Sarpanch*, one representative of the Harijan landless and one of other landless poor. The recommendations made by this Committee will ordinarily be accepted by the *Tehsildar*. Again, this is an opportunity for the *Sarpanch*, who is invariably from the rich class and the dominant community in the village, to put the Harijans against non-Harijans. There are all the possibilities of tensions in the villages mounting as a result of this "crash" programme of the Government, and much more might be heard of it during the coming few months.

The reason for this state of affairs is not far to seek. The leadership of the Congress, both outside and in the Assembly, most of the Ministers and the legislators, the chairmen of Zilla Parishads, Presidents, of the Panchayat Samithis, the top administrators and senior officials in the districts—all hail from the dominant landlord class in the State and any reform on land affects their vital interests. They are not frightened by the agrarian tensions since the law and order machinery is also at their back and call. It will only be an illusion to expect that the landed gentry and their representatives in the Government will take kindly to any radical land reform measure which attempts to redistribute the land and close the gap between the two opposing classes in the rural area.

The Swatantra Party, representing the core of landlords, is dead-set against any land reform and one need not and should not expect them to touch the issue of land reforms even with a barge pole.

It is the Communist movement that has focussed attention for the first time in the State on the question of land reforms, giving the slogan of land to the tiller, confiscation of land from landlords to achieve increased production, and redistribution of wealth in the rural sector. Moreover they have not remained content with mere slogan-mongering, they have gone to the extent of supporting a movement for land with arms as in the Telangana districts where they have distributed ten lakhs of acres by confiscating the lands of the landlords. They have, thus, proved to be the torch-bearers of the movement for land reforms.

With the passage of time, one section of this movement, which is now led by the CPI, has shifted the emphasis from confiscation of land of the landlords to one of distribution of the Government-owned cultivable wastelands. The CPI-led kisan movement has been championing the cause of farmers in respect of fertilisers, supply of seeds, pesticides, fair price for the producer, protection against fall in prices of commercial crops, for more credit facilities, and so on. While there is no doubt that these slogans, if accepted would benefit the poor and the middle farmers and enables the Party to attract them into the united front against the usurious and capitalist landlords, it should not lead to the total neglect of those sections which constitute the majority of the working force in the rural areas and who sacrificed to their last in the 1955 mid term elections and stood like a solid rock behind the Communists and voted for them en bloc.

After the split in the CPI in 1964, the CP(Marxist) adopted a class approach, but either because, they were behind the bars under detention, or preoccupied with elections, they did not make any impact. And close on the heels of this came another split with Sri Nagi Reddy walking out with a majority of the cadres, advocating armed defence of the struggle for land. They have programmed to take out a massive march of the people to the Legislative Assembly demanding radical land reforms. Earlier, the CPI organised a spectacular march of agricultural labourers to the Assembly demanding distribution of wastelands. One has to see whether the Marxists would draw a line between themselves and the CPI by any follow-up action in the form of struggle for land or be satisfied with a demonstration.

The Naxalites in Srikakulam have blazed a path on the very same issue of land. Parties which talk in term of radical land reforms will find it pretty difficult to keep their following within the confines of mere militant battles. It is to the extent the ruling party sees the signs of time that the sweep of the Naxalite movement can be arrested. Otherwise, to quote the Home Ministry's document once again, "The tensions in the rural areas, resulting from the widening gap between the relatively few affluent farmers and the large body of small landholders, landless agricultural workers may increase in the coming months and years."

United Fronts : Pitfalls and Prospects

SATYAPAL DANG

THE fall of the Namboodiripad Ministry in Kerala and the disruption in the United Front that came into existence in 1967 in that State, total opposition declared by the Communist Party (Marxist) to the New Kerala Ministry headed by one of the most respected CPI leaders, Sri Achutha Menon, continuous clashes between the constituent parties of the United Front in Bengal, the fast undertaken by Ajoy Mukherjee, Bengal's Chief Minister, and the satyagraha launched by the Bangla Congress—all these events have caused much disappointment to most if not all the progressives in the country. This disappointment is particularly great because the need of a united front of all the Left and democratic forces on an all-India scale in the country was never so urgent as it is today.

The split in the Congress opens up new possibilities for the progressive forces to take the country forward. The Syndicate-Jana Sangh-Swatantra alliance has brought to the fore the danger of a Rightist take-over. However, an all-India united front of the Left and democratic forces in the country can most certainly ensure the complete rout of the Rightist alliance and clear the way for the country's rapid advance. The common people throughout the country looked upon the United Fronts in Kerala and Bengal not only as models for other states and the country as a whole, but also as effective aids to bring together the progressive forces in the country.

It is, therefore, natural that negative developments in Kerala and Bengal would make the reactionaries happy and cause dismay to the people. Believing that the root cause of the negative developments in Kerala at least are the CPM-CPI differences, quite a few have gone to the extent of proclaiming that "History will never forgive the Communists". Some others even think that Communists will never learn and, therefore, conclude that there is no hope for the progressive forces and hence for the country and its common people.

It must be asserted most emphatically that such an attitude is both wrong and extremely harmful. Surely, every progressive should know that coming into existence of a united front of Left and democratic forces *require not only experience of unity-in-action in mass struggles and class battles, but also ideological struggle against ideas and concepts that run counter to the formation of such a united front.* Take, for instance, the non-Congressism of the SSP which has almost landed this party in the Rightist

camp. A united front between the Communists and SSP on an all-India scale is not possible without, besides other things, a struggle against this concept.

Even the United Fronts of Kerala (1967) and Bengal (1969) came into existence after only a great deal of political and ideological struggle. Formation of these United Fronts could not and did not mean complete identity of views and outlooks. Hence, differences and some sort of struggle within the fronts were and are inevitable.

It is undoubtedly unfortunate that differences in Kerala outweighed the common points leading to an eventual disruption of the front. Yet, it helps only the reactionary forces if one throws up one's hands and says that everything is lost. The correct attitude for every progressive is to have faith in the people, look for the reasons leading to the disruption of the Front in Kerala and guard against the danger of disruption in Bengal, and create a situation in which whosoever has strayed from the proper outlook and behaviour is forced to return to the fold of the united front.

Such an attitude on the part of progressives can even now prevent the repetition of Kerala in Bengal. It will also sooner or later lead to CPM once again taking its rightful place in the UF in Kerala. And it will help in building the united front of Left and democratic parties in other States and in the country as a whole on a sounder and firmer basis. It is undoubtedly not an easy task, but one that cannot and must not be shirked.

II

THE State Governments in India today enjoy limited powers and have to function within the frame work of a bourgeois constitution. Obviously, the CPM like the CPI does not in today's situation consider forming and running State Governments in alliance with other Left and democratic parties pledged to a common programme as "revisionism". CPM, however, does not have a clear and correct conception about the goal and purpose of such governments and of the participation of Communists in them, and hence suffers from sectarianism.

In our view, these Governments should be run in a manner as will give the people as much relief as is possible within their limited powers and resources; secondly, help the people to feel free to build their

organisations, to wage their struggles against their exploiters without the police pouncing on them, and thirdly, to help the people to learn through experience that these Governments cannot bring about far-reaching radical transformations all along the line unless there is a similar government at the Centre and unless the Constitution is radically changed.

To give relief to the people is not reformism. By giving the maximum possible relief these governments will help the common people to see the difference between the united front governments and the discredited Congress rules as well those run by the Rightists as in Orissa. And that will help win new sections of people to their side and, thus, help the revolutionary movement. If the task of giving relief to the people and also a better administration is neglected, and we only concentrate on trying to prove that nothing can be done under the present Constitution, we will succeed only in isolating ourselves.

The sectarian outlook of the CPM in the matter of functioning of the UF Governments was given the clearest expression by Sri B.T. Ranadive in a speech he delivered in London some time ago. In this speech he said that "the task of the Marxist-dominated united Front Governments of Kerala and West Bengal was to unleash discontent of the people rather than 'to give relief'."

The practice resulting from such a sectarian outlook can be amply illustrated by actual instances. Instead of adopting an attitude of struggle against the Centre in connection with its discriminatory attitude in the matter of supply of foodgrains to Kerala, while doing everything possible to maximize procurement inside Kerala, there was a clear, strong and obvious tendency on the part of the CPM in Kerala to concentrate on confrontation with the Centre. The task of procurement inside Kerala, in fact, was completely neglected and the rich peasants and landlords had as much freedom in this respect as they used to have before. Failure of the EMS Ministry to hand over the whole-sale trade to the Food Corporation of India for full three months, speaks volume (This has now been done by the Achutha Memon Ministry). Another instance is the long delay in getting the Land Reforms Bill passed and the failure altogether to pass a new Bill relating to Panchayati Raj, Compulsory recognition of Trade Unions Bill, Gratuity Bill, etc. (The last named has now become law by an Ordinance issued by the Governor at the instances of the Achutha Menon Ministry. There is also the failure (or refusal) of the EMS Ministry to implement such items in the UF programme as (i) the nationalization of private forests in the Malabar, and (ii) the gradual extension of nationalization of private bus routes. More examples could be given but that is hardly necessary.

In the same speech as quoted above, Sri Ranadive said, "Pursuant to this tactic, Marxist Ministers have been told to press ahead with legislations which were likely to be vetoed by the Centre or the High Court. Such confrontations were designed to tell masses of the impossibility of carrying through fundamental reforms under the present constitution."

If and when any legislation is vetoed by the

Centre or the courts, Communists must certainly help the people to draw correct conclusions. But if this becomes your sole conscious object, you cannot but neglect the task of providing relief to the people and that is bound to harm the united front and also lead to differences within it.

III

CPI and the CPM are agreed that the present stage of Indian revolution is not socialist, but democratic. Tasks of the democratic revolution have yet to be completed, and the main enemy at the present stage of the revolution is not the entire bourgeoisie but imperialism, feudalism and monopoly capitalism. Again, both are agreed that all the tasks of the democratic revolution cannot be carried out and completed by any bourgeois government. To carry out a complete democratic revolution, both the CPI and the CPM consider it necessary to forge a front representing an alliance of the working class not only with peasants and petty bourgeoisie but also the non-big-bourgeoisie. The CPM stands for a People's Democratic Front while the CPI stands for a National Democratic Front and the difference is quite vital. However, the CPM is agreed that those sections of the bourgeoisie whose objective interests clash with imperialism and monopoly capital can and will split from the big bourgeoisie and will be compelled to ally with the working class to defend its interests.

From this it should follow that the Communists have to work for this. Any sectarianism in this respect can greatly damage the revolutionary movement by isolating it from its allies.

Alliance of various classes and/or sections of classes on organizational plane will take the form of a front of political parties and organizations representing these classes. Within such a front differences are bound to be there despite agreement on the programme to be carried out. Struggle will also be necessary in such fronts against concepts and ideas which are likely to hinder the realization of the programme, against vacillations, etc. of some of the constituents of the front. But what will be the objective of this struggle? Obviously it can only be *unity* and not weakening, destruction or expulsion of one or more of the constituents of the front unless a constituent represents an enemy class but has somehow come into the front or the democratic revolution has been completed and a new alignment of classes has been put on the agenda.

Such will have to be the attitude of any genuinely Marxist party with regard to the functioning of a united front on an all India plane when it comes into existence as a result of revolutionary mass struggles.

Even more so must be the attitude of a genuinely Marxist party with regard to the functioning of such united fronts of Left and democratic parties as came into existence in Kerala and in West Bengal. The attitude of the Communists towards other left and democratic parties in these fronts must be such as will help bring nearer the working class its allies in the present stage of the revolution on an all-India

basis. The attitude of the Communists must not be such as will increase the gulf between the working class and its potential allies such as the middle classes. This does not mean absence of struggle within such fronts. It only means that the struggle must have unity as its objective.

Both in Kerala and in Bengal the CPM has adopted just the opposite attitude. Even though no constituent party is considered even by the CPM as representative of imperialism or feudalism or monopoly capitalism, it has, in both these fronts (in power), followed a policy of seeking to increase its own strength *at the cost of and by seeking to weaken other or at least some of the other constituent parties of the front*.

It is this attitude of the CPM which can alone explain why in Kerala as well as in Bengal the CPM virtually refused to agree to the distribution of surplus land amongst the landless done under the supervision of the all-party or UF committees. It, in fact, did not favour formation of UF committees at local levels. The CPM doggedly refused to properly function the coordinating committee in Kerala and often insisted that the Chief Minister, which means the CPM must have final decisive voice.

In almost all inter-party clashes that are taking place in Bengal, the CPM is invariably one of the parties involved. In Bengal as well as in Kerala, the CPM has pursued the sectarian policy of demanding that wastelands/surplus lands should go to the people led by it and in pursuance of this policy it has not hesitated to make peasants fight peasants.

The CPM does not hesitate to use even terroristic methods (and setting workers against workers) against unions in which they are in minority and in which the majority belongs to the CPI and/or some other Left party. In Kerala, too, the CPM, out to establish its hegemony, did not hesitate to split unions whenever it failed to get elected to the leading positions.

As pointed out by Sri Bhawani Sen in his pamphlet *CPM's Fight against United Front in West Bengal*, in many educational institutions the managing committees have been removed by the order of the Marxist Minister of Education and administrators have been appointed in place of the committees. This has been done to snatch these committees not only from the hands of Congressmen but also from the partners of the United Front in order to establish the authority of the CPM. Only CPM members are being appointed on the governing bodies of various colleges as Government nominees. Certain district school boards have been dissolved and advisory boards appointed to help the District Inspectors of Schools. All these appointments have gone to the members of the CPM and not a single recruitment has been made from any other party.

IV

CPM also follows some very wrong ideas about using state machinery to increase its strength. In this matter it has faithfully aped the bour-

geois Congress. As Congress rule got more and more discredited, Congress sought to misuse the state machinery and its power to have a base and following among the people. It gave all types of quotas, permits, concessions, etc to those who agreed to finance and support the Congress. While this did give the Congress "cadres" willing to support it, it further isolated itself from the people. The Congress practice however has been followed not only by parties like the Jana Sangh but also by the CPM, believing that this will increase its influence.

In Punjab (as in other States), the Congress Food Ministers misused the powers of the Government to give food depots in a big way to favour those willing to be their stooges. However, during the UF Ministry, the Food Department was with the CPI Minister. A scheme was evolved under which every retail shopkeeper with whom 250 consumers registered their cards was to be given a depot by the Government. The Scheme was widely hailed and praised by the people. Its implementation was, however, stayed by the High Court, which ultimately dismissed the writ petition against it on the Government agreeing to some modifications which did not impair its essential point of giving the people the right to choose their own depots. Before it could be implemented, the Ministry fell. The scheme was first stayed, and then scrapped by the Government headed by Lachhman Singh Gill.

Contrast the above outlook of the CPI with that of the CPM in Kerala as pointed out by C Achutha Menon in his pamphlet *"What happened in Kerala"* "...During President's Rule, the practice in Kerala was that licences for retail shops to distribute rationed foodgrains and sugar were given on the recommendations of the local panchayats and municipalities concerned. This was a good practice inasmuch as these local-government bodies were in a better position to assess local needs and the suitability of the applicants rather than tehsildars.

"But after the present UF Government (EMS Ministry) assumed office, the revenue Minister cancelled the relevant rules, and she now decides as to who should be given a retail licence in any corner of the State. And, of course, she has to rely either on the advice of the local tehsildar or the dictates of her own party men in the locality. This is an example of the way in which the CPM approaches the whole question of administration."

As another instance of the same approach, we may refer to the fairly widely known fact that in the Transport Department of the EMS Government held by a CPM Minister, one could not hope to get a job unless one had the recommendations of the CPM.

How can Communists in power run the Government successfully unless you have in the administration men who are reliable? Our answer is first, the Communists should not claim the monopoly of alone being considered loyal and reliable to a progressive regime; secondly, it may certainly be correct to put in some key positions men who are loyal to the policies and will neither sabotage nor permit the same, but surely that has nothing to do with filling

posts of drivers, conductors, etc. Not to fill such posts on merits at best is not to have faith in the common people. Even the post which must have people whose loyalty to policies is unquestioned, must not be filled arbitrarily but on the basis of certain principles, taking into account other qualifications, and merits and whether one possesses the essential qualifications, thirdly when you are a part of a UF government, it is highly sectarian and disruptive to think that only followers of your party are reliable.

As admitted by him on the floor of the Kerala Assembly, the CPM Minister in charge of Road Transport, gave direct appointments to 243 persons in the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation even without advertizing the vacancies and inviting applications. And he did this at a time when about 4,300 applications were pending with the Corporation from candidates, each one whom had paid the application fee of Rs 10 and were awaiting calls for interview! Those given direct appointments included the daughter of CPM State Committee Secretary C.H. Kanaran and a niece of A.K. Gopalan M.P. It is difficult to believe but it is a fact that CPM Minister Imbichi Bawa defended his action on the ground that men like A.K. Gopalan were "A class" citizens! It is high time that the CPM ranks ask the question. Whiter CPM? and raise their voice against the sectarian policies of their leaders.

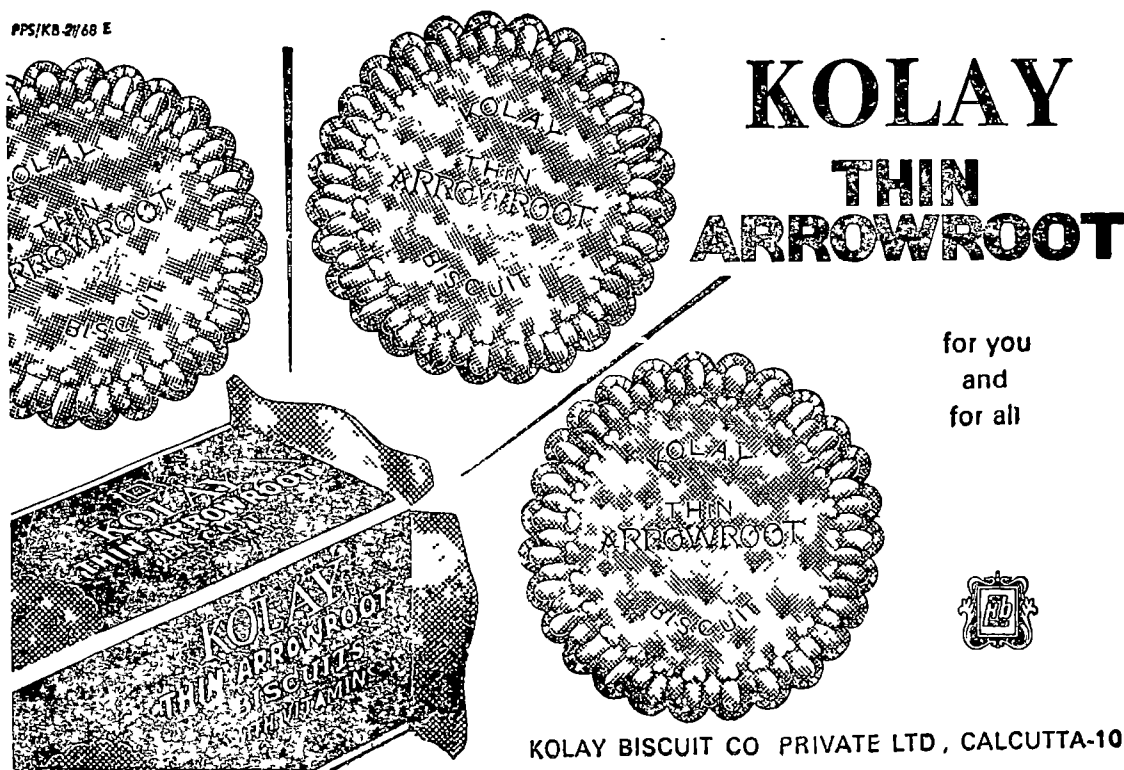
Some friends of the CPM raise the question. If the CPM has gone as wrong as that, how is it that it has managed to increase its strength? Does it not

prove that its policies are correct? It is not necessary to argue about the correctness or otherwise of the assertion about the CPM having increased its strength. Let us for arguments sake assume that it is so. After all, the EMS Ministry in Kerala had some positive achievements to its credit and more so the UF Government in Bengal. That would help all the parties of the Front to increase their influence and particularly the leading partner, the CPM.

Secondly, certain correct policies, for instance land to the landless as in West Bengal, can result in increase in the CPM's influence and strength as well as of other parties of the Front amongst the rural poor. At the same time, wrong and sectarian aspects, of its policies can lead to its isolation from such allies of the working class as the middle classes. For the development of the revolutionary movement it would be harmful if the Communists, even though stronger among the working class or the rural poor, manage to isolate the working class from its other allies. And let it not be forgotten that strength and influence won by distributing favours, etc. is not strength at all considered from the viewpoint of the revolution!

In the end one must emphasise the urgent need for a widespread discussion about the new complicated problems thrown up by life in connection with the formation of the UF government in certain States. Such a discussion, combined with a consistent struggle against sectarianism, is essential to overcome the wide rift in the Left camp including the rift between the two Left parties.

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Chief Minister and his Colleagues

C. R. RATHEE

THE recent controversy between the West Bengal Chief Minister, Sri Ajoy Mukherjee, and the Deputy Chief Minister, Sri Jyoti Basu, could not have caused much surprise had the two not attempted to take shelter behind the clauses of the Constitution of India.

The Chief Minister says that he is empowered by the Constitution to supervise the functioning of each department of the Government and ensure its working to conform to the policy of the ruling party as also the provisions of the Constitution to protect which he has taken an oath. The Rules of Business of the West Bengal Council of Ministers also expect the Chief Minister to supervise and exercise general control over the Departments under the charge of other Ministers.

But Sri Jyoti Basu has maintained that Sri Ajoy Mukherjee has misread the intention of both the Constitution and the Rules of Business. If what Sri Mukherjee interprets was the intention of the Constitution-makers or the framers of the Rules of Business, then they never meant to set up parliamentary democracy in the country.

A Chief Minister clothed with such vast powers as warranted by Article 164 of the Constitution and Rule 29 of the Rules of Business of the West Bengal Council of Ministers could become a dictator, Sri Basu has stated in one of his recent communications addressed to the Chief Minister.

Another argument advanced in favour of "limiting the authority of the Chief Minister" by Sri Basu is that a Coalition Chief can not act in a manner a single

party Chief Minister can. The limiting factor in the case of Coalition Chief Minister is the Minimum Programme and the Co-ordination Committee of the United Front. These serve as political restraints on the Coalition Chief.

Vital Question

The Mukherjee-versus-Basu controversy, thus, has raised a vital question of constitutional importance and needs to be discussed from the standpoint of its impact on the working of parliamentary democracy in India. As the balance of power has been disturbed at the Centre, such controversies might arise at the Central level.

Article 164 (1) of the Constitution states "Ministers shall be appointed by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister and shall hold office during the Pleasure of the Governor". Commentators interpret "Pleasure of Governor" as "Pleasure of the Chief Minister". If the Governor is advised by the Chief Minister that a particular Minister be dismissed, the Governor would exercise his "Pleasure" and dismiss the Minister.

Sir Ivor Jennings has described the "Pleasure Doctrine" as the right of the chief of government to reconstruct his government. Late Sardar Pratap Singh Kairon (former Punjab Chief Minister) used the "Pleasure Doctrine" to sack the then Minister in his Council, Rao Birender Singh in 1956. In the same way, former Punjab Minister, Sri Bhim Sen Sachar did away with his Local Government Minister, Sri Sri Ram Sharma in 1953,

Numerous examples of this type are available in the British constitutional history to prove that the "Pleasure Doctrine" is an accepted principle of parliamentary form of government.

Article 164(2) of the Constitution of India makes the Council of Ministers collectively responsible to the Vidhan Sabha of the State. This has been interpreted to mean that the Chief Minister is the chief supervisor and general coordinator of the various governmental departments.

It is under this Article that the Chief Ministers send for the files belonging to Departments headed by various Ministers. And it is under this Article that the Chief Ministers interfere in the affairs of other Ministries and even supersede orders passed by his Ministerial colleagues.

Every State Government has framed Rules of Business for the convenient and constitutional discharge of its duties. These Rules of Business are an adaptation of the Rules of Business of the Union Cabinet, which in turn, are a copy of the Rules of Business of the British Council of Ministers.

Rule 29 as adapted in West Bengal supplements Article 164(2) of the Constitution of India in so far as the Chief Minister has been vested with the powers of general co-ordinator and supervisor. In exercise of this power, Sri Ajoy Mukherjee sent for certain files of the Home Department (under Sri Jyoti Basu) and cancelled the Home Minister's orders. The latter re-issued the very same orders leading to all this controversy.

Collective Responsibility

The Doctrine of Collective Responsibility warranted that the Chief Minister of West Bengal should have convened a Cabinet meeting to isolate Sri Basu or tendered his resignation which would have meant the resignation of the whole Cabinet. If the majority had still supported Sri Mukherjee, the Governor would have asked him to constitute his Cabinet again.

Another constitutional option

for Sri Mukherjee was to make use of the "Pleasure Doctrine" to get Sri Basu sacked by the Governor or at least divest the latter of the Home portfolio. But instead of taking shelter under these constitutional provisions, Sri Mukherjee resorted to an unconstitutional method of fasting in the public. His adversaries are not very much wrong when they charge him of making political capital out of the situation with an eye to another mid-term poll in West Bengal.

Why else did the Chief Minister and three other Ministers belonging to Bangla Congress carry on a State-wide tour criticising Sri Basu and other Ministers belonging to the Communist Party of India (Marxist)? This is a flagrant violation of the principle of ministerial homogeneity. And of all the Ministers, the Chief Minister does so.

Compromise Formula

Sri Jyoti Basu's arguments in this controversy are not without meaning and significance. The Chief Minister in a coalition government has to keep in view the Compromise Formula on which the coalition is based and has to carry the United Front Co-ordination Committee with him. The Compromise Formula of the West Bengal Coalition arrived at by the 14-party United Front on February 21, 1969 enjoins upon the Chief Minister to "place before the Co-ordination Committee all cases of conflict between Ministers belonging to different parties."

While, the number of Ministers to be had from various parties was fixed (as also the Departments to be managed by them) who shall be the ministers from various constituents of the UF was left to be decided by the individual parties. The UF Co-ordination Committee further decided that Sri Ajoy Mukherjee should be the Chief Minister and Sri Jyoti Basu, Deputy Chief Minister with Home Portfolio.

Sri Ajoy Mukherjee has no choice either to drop Sri Basu

from his Cabinet or to divest him of his portfolio. Only the UF Co-ordination Committee can do that. But the latter has declined to help the Chief Minister. Then why is Sri Mukherjee claiming that he could do this or that? The Constitution is still on his side and he should submit his Cabinet's resignation to set up an example of healthy parliamentary life. He is right in saying that he has a constitutional duty to perform and to do so he should not hesitate to resign.

We are running coalitions in a number of States and it seems that for some years to come coalitions would be the routine order of politics. Let the politicians bear in mind that law or agreement plays a minor role in human affairs; mutual understanding is the real guiding spirit.

Whatever be the complexions in a coalition all of its constituents have to abide by the law of the land. Even those believing in direct action will have to do so.

Of course, a coalition into which a law-breaking programme is carried by a constituent unit, will collapse under its own contradictions. But before that happens, much damage will have been done to the fabric of parliamentary democracy. The Chief Minister of a coalition, therefore, should be bold enough to tell the erring constituents to behave or he should quit.

Image Building

What prompts a coalition-constituent to make use of governmental machinery in its bid to improve its image in the public so that it could secure more votes during next election? This could be remedied if the party bosses are kept aloof from the day-to-day administration. To quote, former coalition Chief Minister of UP Sri Charan Singh, "the success of a coalition government depends upon a strong-willed Chief Minister who should be ready to sack the erring colleagues at the

risk of resignation of the whole Ministry."

The opportunistic era of non-Congressism has gone. The monolith has been demolished and coalitions have come to stay. Let all political parties do a thorough heart-searching and reorientate their thinking and practice.

The Governor too should not always remain a silent spectator of the game of destroying parliamentary structure by the in-fights of the UF partners. Article 167(c) of the Constitution clothes him with sufficient powers in this regard. It reads "If the Governor so requires, to submit for the consideration of the Council of Ministers any matter on which a decision has been taken by a Minister but which has not been considered by the Council." The decision of Sri Jyoti Basu about the withdrawal of some police cases has aroused so much of political heat that the West Bengal Governor should have invoked Article 167(c).

Governor's Duty

Speaking in the Constituent Assembly on this Article, former Governor and a Member of the Drafting Committee, Sri K M Munshi, had said "When a Minister acts behind the back of his colleagues, behind the back of the Chief Minister, responsible for all actions of the Ministry, why cannot the Governor say 'Here is a particular order. I feel that a matter of great importance. I want that by virtue of collective responsibility all Ministers must meet together and consider it? If they accept, it is alright. It is a safeguard which preserves the collective responsibility and the powers of the Chief Minister and not a power which interferes with the Government.'" Sri Munshi had further added that Article 167(c) would be particularly useful in States with coalitions. (See *Constituent Assembly Debates*, Vol VIII, pp 551-53)

The Constitution of India is clearly on the side of West Bengal Governor and Chief Minister. Will they act?

Gandhism and Modern India

G. P. BHATTACHARYA

BADSHA KHAN in many of his recent speeches has expressed deep regret at the abandonment by India of the Gandhian principles and ideas. The present miserable condition of the Indians is traced by him to this factor

People of goodwill will certainly deplore the eclipse of the Gandhian values from India, but the more important question that appears to the mind of a social scientist is—why has India rejected Gandhism though she sincerely considers Gandhiji as the father of their nation?

Is it simply due to the moral degeneration of the Indians, as Badsha Khan seems to think? If so, why is this moral degeneration? Why did Gandhism fail to tone up the moral fibre of its followers?

Political Weapon

The fact must undoubtedly be acknowledged, and then an enquiry made to discover its causes. The rejection of Gandhism by the Indians is a fact, in spite of the movement by Vinoba Bhave and lip service to Gandhism by many of our national leaders. Is this rejection due to the inadequacy of Gandhism or to the moral depravity of the Indians? That is the question

Did the Indian people and the national leaders of the Congress ever accept Gandhism? They indeed accepted Gandhi, the politician, who organised and mobilised the Indian people in their battle for national independence against the foreign imperialist rule. They accepted the cult

of satyagraha and the technique of non-cooperation as a political weapon. This weapon they use even to-day to bring pressure upon the authority.

But, beyond that, very few of the Indian leaders who swear by Gandhism have accepted the Gandhian metaphysics or ethics, or its economic philosophy. They may accept some values or ideas associated with Gandhism, such as the dignity and freedom of the individual, abolition of untouchability, decentralisation in political and economic system, or even the purity of means to realise a noble purpose, but these values and ideas have been sought to be integrated by them with a different system of philosophy.

No important leader of the Indian National Congress—neither Jawaharlal Nehru nor Sardar Patel—accepted non violence as a creed. Non-violence as an ultimate values is accepted by all thinkers of all ages (except in militaristic cults, such as fascism), but no important leader during the freedom movement of India accepted it in the Gandhian sense

Never Accepted

The Gandhian ideal of non-violence is based on the faith of the change of heart of the opponent, and the contribution of Gandhiji in this sphere is his assertion that non-violence can be practised here and now. It must not be cherished as an ultimate value to be practised in an ideal society which still lies in the womb of the future

The people of India responded to the clarion call of Gandhiji not because they were convinced

of the Gandhian philosophy, but due to his anti-imperialist role. If this view is accepted, the question of rejection of Gandhism by India does not arise. It was never accepted by India.

After Independence, India did not follow the Gandhian path. This was not because of the moral degeneration of the Indians but due to the inadequacy or rather impracticability of Gandhism. Gandhiji stood for a self-contained, self-sufficient village economy. Whatever might be the changes in his view on industrialism, he was opposed to the introduction of large-scale industries in India. He considered material comfort as a hindrance to spiritual development. The concept of a higher and higher standard of living was anathema to him

Unmistakable Choice

But the Indian people after Independence preferred a life of material prosperity (which need not necessarily mean moral degradation) to that of voluntary poverty. Why the Indian Government has largely failed to satisfy the popular aspirations is a different question, but the choice of the Indian people is unmistakable. It was not in favour of Gandhism.

They wanted economic prosperity like the people all over the world. Human nature as it is, asserted itself in India also. If human nature does not follow the Gandhian principles, who is to be blamed? It is futile to fight with human nature

If the Indian people rejected the doctrine of trusteeship, an integral part of the Gandhian philosophy, it is simply because it was an unworkable proposition. The conduct of landholders and capitalists both in India and in the rest of the world did not inspire the least confidence that they would act as trustees. The Indian landlords did never treat the peasants as their sons or brothers. Nor did the Indian capitalists adopt brotherly attitude towards the workers

If actual experience runs in direct contradiction to the Gandhian principles, what should

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the Indian people do? No ideology which contradicts experience and reality can succeed

In India, Acharya Vinoba Bhave and Sri Jayaprakash Narain are trying sincerely to follow the Gandhian path, but Badshah Khan has clearly pointed out that this movement would fail to leave any impact upon the Indian political life.

It may be that the Bhoodan movement has attained some success. A considerable portion of land may have been secured through gift. But does it imply a change of heart of the people who have made the gift? Moreover, distribution of land to the peasants is itself an admission of the failure of the doctrine of trusteeship.

Gandhiji thought that the people have the right to resort to satyagraha if the landlords

and capitalists refused to act as trustees. In that case, satyagraha movement must be started throughout the country causing serious setback to the economic life. Is it not better to use governmental power to bring about necessary changes in the economic structure of the society?

The assumption of the divine conception of human nature is unwarranted. A social philosophy based on this assumption is bound to fail when the attempt to put it into practice is made. Leaders who swear by the name of Gandhiji are indulging in Machiavellian politics. A social philosophy based on unwarranted assumptions and unworkable propositions is the breeding ground of hypocrisy, however noble may be the ideals it cherishes. Utopianism is the grave-yard of idealism in practice.

ged disparity in existences and behaviours, in other words, permit ironies that run horizontally but not those that do vertically.

In the old days, one is always being told by one's parents, there was no flaunting of promiscuous desires; no public pornography. What is conveniently forgotten is that in the old days, in India, there was child marriage, whereby 25 year old virgins were the exception and not the rule in large social sections.

While child marriage was abolished, the old code of social intercourse between the two sexes was not relaxed in its orthodoxy, and sex became a blind-spot of the Indian psyche.

Gandhi might have had at the back of his mind the truism that the channelising of sexual energy is socially necessary to an economically underdeveloped community. Gandhi spent his years, after India attained Independence, in trying to change certain social attitudes, the sexual ethic he reinstated in the line of the immediate tradition, and expected the National Congress government to lead an economic struggle.

Something evidently went wrong in that arrangement, and, in the cursory evaluation that followed, the heroes of that time had to pay the price, often the unwarranted price. Unyoked from the strains of the political struggle, seeing the beginning of the end of the joint-family system, and not being plunged into another struggle, each man, in a sense, was left to himself, and sensory experiences—as they would in such a situation—became both novelty and necessity. It was this, perhaps, that Gandhi could not contain.

As more and more impacts were made on the social fabric by alien economic processes, Gandhi became associated not only with an unattractive asceticism but also, falsely, with a resistance to the new technology. While he could not foresee that the Anglo-Indian anticipated future urban fashions in social behaviour, it seems too ludicrous—while the National Congress had also talked of a planned economy—that Gandhi did not

Youth's One-Dimensional Attitude

ANIL SAARI

THE attitudes to Gandhi today—if not in Indian society as a whole, certainly among the young—are markedly one-dimensional. When one considers the range over which these attitudes are spread, one is appalled by their singularity.

In the newspapers and journals, and in the other mediums of mass-communications one attempt has so far been made to discover and elaborate the complexity and subtlety of a public figure who held so vehemently and vocally to private and personal beliefs.

It is no wonder, then, that for the post-Independence generation, Gandhi became largely the man who has made so many enigmatic and didactic statements and who, for all practical purposes, exists in the speeches of politicians, in the films of the Films Division, in the mind of Vinoba Bhave,

in the Prohibition Committees, in school and college halls, as a name to many streets in many towns, and in history. How can Gandhi interest the young cinegoers who are obsessed with the discovery of the body of the opposite sex?

Classic Irony

I do not, for one, understand how Gandhi could preach celibacy to a society which was changing its social and sexual morals drastically, and how celibacy could be the cornerstone of an ethical code in a technological society.

In the village such a code would not disturb daily life because of the classic irony in village life, the irony between the word spoken and the deed that could be done, of what life ought to be and happens in life. Urban communities want to rationalise, and decry that as hypocrisy or human failure, though they permit acknowledged

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expect European and American technology on the Indian landscape

In stressing a decentralised structure of small-scale and indigenous industries was envisaged a second-line force in the economic struggle. While the major projects would take to show to advantage, the local industries could produce for basic needs

If these indigenous industries had been worked properly, there would not be the devastating scarcity of oil, clothing and other necessary accessories to living, that exists in so many of our villages today

While Gandhi himself became involved with the problem of social harmony and of the rehabilitation of those whom society mistreats as outcasts, it was the role of the innumerable Gandhians to carry out Gandhi's grass-root economic ideas

Serious Blunders

No objective history of the Gandhians has yet been written, but if one is to judge them by their present form, it can safely be assumed that they committed serious blunders in, One, depending too much and too egocentrically on the aid that the government could give to their projects; Two, in being obsessed with the moralities of prohibition and censorship in the cinema at the cost of other vital social issues—remember their monstrous repetition of the glories of the 'satyagraha', a method that had succeeded but which, at Independence, was rather irrelevant to the times! and Three, in not understanding the curbs that had to be made on the capitalist's role in the "new" society, and in seeking immediate political remuneration for their political past.

During the campaigns of the early general elections, political parties in opposition to the National Congress would put up posters that quoted Gandhi's desire that the Congress be dissolved after independence was won. That it was not is one thing. What Gandhians did not do, those early years, was to strengthen the social-reform

movement they loosely wielded throughout the country.

Gandhi's beliefs are mostly beliefs in human restraint and their utility lies in that restraint can induce a power which can be directed for purposes that would elude minor force. These are beliefs that have to be extensively educated about and built up in the individual

Major Issues

Gandhians had to win over people in the manner they had been by Gandhi. Because Gandhians did not do this, and so missed an essential point of Gandhi's personality, they could not combat a fascist revivalism that exploited every bit of human pettiness and that is in such total opposition to Gandhian ideas about human existence

It is at this juncture that major political and intellectual points arise. Was not the challenge of communalism a challenge that the Gandhians had to face? Was not the Harijan problem linked to the economic structure—not in terms of entry into the government service, but in the villages and the towns? Could these challenges be met by the government alone? Would not

a comprehensive campaign be necessary for these tasks?

Why did Gandhians, inside and outside the National Congress, fail to sustain themselves as a movement after the death of Gandhi? How did Gandhism fail to become an intellectual and political movement, such as Marxism is in Europe and Maoist-Marxism in China?

In the light of such questions, one finds those who profess to be Gandhians to be either elusive to reality, or trying to make "Gandhi" a magic name for political or other status, or, strangely, to be in the wrong camp politically. Perhaps they have too subtle an attitude to Gandhi.

More than the repetition of his name and more than wasting so much money—would it not, after all, have been better to have spent all the money on concrete projects rather than on the publicity of a man who is too well-known already to his countrymen?

What is essential, and *a priori*, because Gandhi is so prominently a part of recent Indian history, is to analyse the man and his times and our times and to call a spade a spade, and to be free with him while we work out what we need

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Need—A New Constitution

SUBRATA MUKHERJEE

NATIONALISATION of fourteen banks in July, which was described by the Prime Minister as a small step, was recently declared unconstitutional and void by the Supreme Court. The Government, keeping in view the Court's ruling, reframed the whole nationalisation scheme, incorporating fundamental changes from the one's envisaged earlier and declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.

One of the most important changes brought about in the new ordinance for bank nationalisation (re-nationalisation) is the mode of compensation. What has emerged in this modified renationalisation in a vital sector is a compromise which has watered down the very social purpose of bank nationalisation, and even this moderate version, many fear, may be declared unconstitutional again by the judiciary.

Important Issue

The interesting point to note here is that there is little doubt that the overwhelming majority of the parliamentarians and the people are for nationalisation of banks, many for the nationalisation of all banks—Indian and foreign. Yet, the Supreme Court verdict went against nationalisation with an astonishing majority of ten to one.

Because of this judgement and the well-known ruling in the *Golak Nath* case, the question arises to what extent our Constitution is capable of implementing the principles of the Preamble, acclaimed by a well-known politi-

cal theorist like Sir Earnest Barker, and the Part Four of the Constitution called the Directive Principles, which are to be fundamental in the governance of the country but not justiciable and their implementation is not possible without infringing the fundamental right which, according to the verdict in the *Golak Nath* case, are beyond the competence of Parliament to modify or alter. This is a very important issue, as without the implementation of the Directive Principles, which want to provide the minimum requirements to all the citizens, the very conception of political democracy will be a mirage, for the masses.

Constitutional Amendments

In the light of this, what is called for is an examination of our constitutional structure and how far it is compatible with the present-day needs and aspirations of the people and, if it is not, to conceive of certain alternatives, like amending the Constitution suitably to make it acceptable, or to convene a fresh constituent assembly to make a new constitution for the country.

The Supreme Court decision declaring Bank Nationalisation Act void makes it absolutely clear that even small, socialistic measures are being frustrated by the Right to Property which is a Fundamental Right under Articles 19(1)(f), 31, 31(a) and 31(b). The three constitutional amendments—the First, the Fourth and the Seventeenth—wanted to clear some of these obstacles, though did not materially change the character of the fundamental rights to property.

The First Amendment took out from the purview of the courts the acquisition of estates and added Articles 31A, 31B and the Ninth Schedule to the Constitution. The Fourth enlarged the scope of these provisions so that some more welfare legislations might be kept out of the ambit of the court's jurisdiction by making Articles 31(1) and 31(2) mutually exclusive. The Seventeenth Amendment further extended the definition of an estate.

After the Fourth Amendment, which clarified subclauses (1) and (2) of Article 31, making them mutually exclusive, the Supreme Court has ruled that deprivation of property by methods other than acquisition and requisition must qualify the test of reasonableness as laid down by Article 19(5) and that Articles 31(2) and 19(1)(f) are not exclusive, making any desirable change in property relationship difficult.

The Supreme Court, in the famous *A K Gopalan's* case, ruled that the court need consider only the object and form of state action and ignore the effects of the laws on fundamental rights on individuals, and that if the state action fell within one Article, the other Articles of the Fundamental Rights could be ignored. This made a fundamental difference between the American Constitution and ours, circumscribing much of the liberties of the individual.

But, in the *Golak Nath* case, by a majority of six to five the Supreme Court reversed its earlier judgement and ruled that constitutional amendment being a matter of legislative procedure, is a law within Article 13(2) and as such a constitutional amendment which takes away or curtails fundamental rights is null and void.

Constituent Assembly

Thus, with the constitutional amendment of Fundamental Rights beyond parliament's jurisdiction the only body competent to do so is a special Constituent Assembly called for the purpose. As such, any legislation which, according to the Supreme Court, violates any of the Articles of the

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Fundamental Rights, will be void, and as no substantial change is possible without the amendment of some of the Fundamental Rights, there is no alternative to the present status quo

The usefulness and practicability of a constitution is to be judged by its flexibility to accommodate essential economic, social and political reforms introduced lawfully, without any violence or bloodshed—what Laski described as revolution by consent. But the working of the Constitution in the last twenty years has generated more violence and loss of many a precious life, which has no parallel even in the colonial rule under the Britishers, so much so that some people are pleading for a bloody revolution to bring about the much desired social and economic changes.

Stumbling Block

Is the present Constitution capable of achieving the pious wishes described so beautifully in the Preamble? The answer is no, as in spite of twenty-three amendments in this crucial period of twenty years, the Constitution, instead of proving itself to be the instrument of progress and social regeneration, has proved to be a stumbling block to all kinds of change, even piecemeal ones, without which no political entity can develop, specially after the Supreme Court judgement in the Golak Nath case, by which Parliament has no power to alter the Fundamental Rights.

It means that any nationalisation scheme or equitarian step can be struck down by the Supreme Court on the ground that they violate Fundamental Rights. In this country when monopolies have multiplied in a remarkably short time, with corruption and mismanagement eaten away most of the foreign aid, not only any compensation has to be paid in case of nationalisation, but that it is to be paid according to the direction of the court.

The need today is not only restoration of Parliamentary supremacy in legislation even in regard to Fundamental

Rights or taking away the right to property from the category of Fundamental Rights as envisaged in part three of the Constitution but much more. The need is to frame a new constitution, a truly people's constitution unlike the present one, by the elected representatives of the people which will open new dimensions in our federal polity.

New Constitution

Time and again the narrow limitations of the present Constitution have come to the surface even in matters of ordinary reforms and in important issues like the Centre-State relations. The present Constitution has perpetuated the rule of the propertied class without any significant movement towards bridging the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

The constitution is the pivot around which the political spectrum of the whole country revolves and in our country today it has become an instrument in the hands of those who do not want the establishment of an egalitarian society. Under our republican Constitution, based on the principle of one man one vote, what we find is not the expression of the urges and hopes of the majority. As such, it may well be asserted that the present Constitution has outlived its utility.

Constitution of a country is not a show-piece but an important

instrument, if not the only instrument, of national progress. Our experience has clearly revealed that this Constitution cannot deliver the goods. The efforts of Sri Nath Pai to restore to Parliament the right to amend fundamental rights are indeed laudable, but not enough.

With a slow implementing machinery, with powers vested in the judiciary to stall implementation, at least for a considerable period of time, as was evident during the days of Zamindari abolition, the need is much more. The top heavy administration with little initiative and grass-root work and the unnecessary complexities within the Constitution, the contradictions between different sections, with constitutional guarantees ensured to certain sections, are all factors which are absolutely incompatible with the democratic ideals of liberty and equality.

This Constitution cannot be the framework by which we can aspire for the multi-dimensional changes that is urgently required today. To achieve our goal we need a new constitution, new both in spirit and content, which will make possible the changes by which no section of the people will be privileged enough to exploit others. What we need is a new constitution which will fulfil the desires of the overwhelming masses of the people and make democracy real by the effective use of economic and political power in their favour.

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Credit for Rural Sector

S. C. SRIVASTAVA

WHATEVER else might have motivated the bank nationalisation and renationalisation, its most important aspect is how best credit is disbursed for the wider good of the people at large. Evidently, the present credit pattern will have to undergo a radical revision so as to meet increasingly the credit needs of all the productive sectors and particularly those of agriculture, small industry, export, budding entrepreneurs and weaker section of the society.

The existing pattern of sectoral distribution of credit is heavily weighted in favour of large-scale industry, wholesale trade and commerce, rather than agriculture, small industries, retail trade and small borrowers.

Pattern Unchanged

Agriculture which contributed more than 50 per cent of the national income, gets 21 per cent of the bank credit, whereas industry which contributes less than one-fifth of the national income appropriates nearly two-third of the bank credit. More than four-fifth of the scheduled commercial banks' credit goes to industry and commerce which account for roughly one-third of national income.

Although there has been a slight increase in advances to non-conventional borrowers from the agricultural and small industry sectors under the scheme of social control introduced towards the

far end of 1967, the pattern of bank advances has generally remained unchanged.

Again, loaning policies of the banks are largely security-oriented, 86 per cent of the scheduled commercial bank advances were against tangible security as late as in May 1969.

The new credit policy should, therefore, do away with excessive preoccupation with considerations of tangible security. Financing of non-conventional borrowers in the agricultural and small-scale sectors involves a shift from traditional concepts of creditworthiness to a loaning system based on technical feasibility, economic viability, and projected repayment capacity of the borrower.

It is a happy augury that at a joint meeting of the nationalised banks and the fertiliser industry held in Madras recently, the nationalised banks announced a liberalised loan facility to the farming sector under which short-term production loans upto Rs 5,000 or Rs 10,000 would be advanced to farmers, both big and small without demanding any tangible security, other than hypothecation of standing crop. For larger production loans exceeding Rs 5,000 or Rs 10,000, additional collecteral security by way of mortgage of lands, houses, shares or insurance policies would be called for. On behalf of one of the nationalised banks it was also announced that its agents had been given discretionary power to allow clean production loan up to Rs 1500 per farmer. The loan will be extended for the duration of the crop and the due date will be fixed in a way that the loan becomes payable

immediately after harvest of the crop.

The State Bank of India has taken the lead in offering all types of loans to agriculturists, short-term and long-term. The loans will cover the entire gamut of agricultural operations like land reclamation, sinking of wells and supply of agricultural inputs.¹

The nationalised banks, thus, seem to be vying with one another in offering finance to agricultural schemes. In this scramble of the banks for stealing the show, there is probability of the farmer getting over-credited, particularly because for assessing the credit needs the nationalised banks have fixed their own norms, and in the midst of all round cry for increased farm finance, the banks are likely to overdo their job.

Credit Needs

There is, therefore, an urgent need for laying down certain basic principles and fixing of norms for assessing the credit needs of the farm sector.

It needs to be emphasised that in case of agriculture, there should be no significant variations between the credit estimates of commercial banks and those of the cooperative banks. The cost of cultivation of each crop is estimated at the field workers' conference by the cooperatives under the crop loan system. The crop loan system adopted by the cooperatives has brought about an overt shift in their loan policy from "asset nexus" to "production nexus".

Fifty-two per cent of the total loan of primary agricultural credit societies were against anticipated crops and third party security, while advances against tangible securities were only 48 per cent, as compared to 86 per cent of commercial banks.

As a first step towards co-ordination, the commercial banks should adopt the crop loan system of cooperative banks as a basic policy for farm loans. This would avoid divergent farm loan policies not only as between different commercial banks but

¹Ashakant, "New Credit Policy for Banks," *The Economic Times*; January 13, 1970, p. 5.

Dr Srivastava is Lecturer in Economics, Banaras Hindu University. This article is a sequel to his earlier one on "Case for Agricultural Taxation", published in *Mainstream* of February 14, 1970.

also between commercial banks and cooperative banks²

In this context, a scheme of "lead banks" prepared by the Reserve Bank of India may be mentioned. Under this scheme specific districts are allotted to a commercial bank and it is required to take the lead in surveying the potential for banking development in extending branch banking and in expanding credit facilities.

The Reserve Bank has also laid down that during the first half of 1970, a minimum of 600 new branches should be opened by the major scheduled banks of which not less than 400 should be in unbanked centres. In this scheme, the concerned bank will be primarily responsible for the banking development of the district.

The lead bank may therefore, prepare comprehensive credit plan, for financing the farm credit needs, the lead bank may adopt the crop loan system as the basis.

While preparing the credit plan, the banks may keep in mind the suggestion of a study group headed by Planning Commission Deputy Chairman D.R. Gadgil. The group observes: "A close examination may be conducted of the present working of credit guarantee scheme and a view may be taken of the extent to which these can be liberalised or applied to new fields so as to provide further assistance to banks and credit institutions in extending credit to small business and weaker sections."

At present, credit guarantee scheme is applicable only to small-scale industries. It would, therefore, be in fitness of things if we establish a National Guarantee Fund along lines of the one in existence in Japan. The Japanese Fund guarantees credit for industry only; the one to be operated in India, can be extended to giving guarantees to farmers and other vulnerable sections of the economy.

The "lead bank" should, in its turn earmark certain proportion of deposits mobilised in rural areas for local development.

The average credit deposit ratio of 70 per cent may be taken as the guiding norm.³ This would give a momentum to deposit mobilisation effort, for "rural savings are most likely to be rendered available where most seen to be used for rural needs"⁴

The lead bank has to play a major role in the formulation and implementation of District credit plan recommended by National credit council's study group presided over by Professor Gadgil. Once a comprehensive credit plan is prepared, the commercial banks should not wait until their own branches are established in all the areas of the district but should utilise the available institutional channel, namely, primary agricultural credit society for executing the plan.

Commercial banks should directly finance primary agricultural credit societies, where central cooperative banks are not in a position to provide adequate

³Ashakant, *op cit*

⁴All India Rural Credit Survey—General Report, p. 487

credit facilities to the societies. There should be a closer coordination and functional relationship between the commercial and cooperative banks; after all they are two sides of the same medal and as observed by the Gadgil Committee, "a direct relationship between a commercial bank and a cooperative society will solve a number of problems."

Thus, the new credit policy for the agricultural sector would entail a shift from security-oriented policy to development-oriented policy, adoption of crop loan system of the cooperatives in respect of farm financing, an objective assessment of the credit needs of the allotted districts areas, playing major role in the formulation and implementation of district plans, instituting National Guarantee Fund along the lines of the one in Japan, specification of a proportion of rural deposits for local deployment, and a clear coordination and operational linkage between commercial banks and cooperative institutions.

NEW INDUSTRIAL POLICY

(Continued from page 12)

The same reasoning applies for the suggestion that public financial institutions should have a say in the management of companies to which they have given substantial assistance. But before this be effected, it will become necessary to ensure that the financial institutions themselves come under proper management.

I have dealt with the proposal regarding conversion of loans into equity in contributions published before. For a variety of reasons this is not a very good idea.

It has not been possible to make a more detailed analysis of the "New Industrial Policy" largely because there has so far been no adequate elaboration and explanation of its different facets by official agencies. From what one sees in press reports, however, the conclusion is clear that this is another one of those patch-work

quilt "policies" our official experts (and somnolent politicians) are so adept at bringing out.

The crux of the matter is, who is going to implement them, and how far they are committed to the bringing about a better social order.

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²Ashakant, *op cit*.

Whose Rights are at Stake?

FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC JUSTICE IN THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION, K P. Krishna Shetty, Chaitanya Publishing House, Allahabad, pp 192, Rs 18

SOME of the judgements of the Supreme Court of India, climaxed by the recent verdict striking down the Bank Nationalisation Act, have thrown open the question of Parliament's powers to enact laws in furtherance of the socio-economic objectives laid down in the Directive Principles of State Policy.

Although many politicians throw up their hands in horror when the current problem is posed as a confrontation between the Judiciary and Parliament, the fact remains that the supremacy of the elected representatives of the people in the sphere of formulating and implementing measures aimed at bringing about structural changes in the economy is under direct challenge as a result of the Supreme Court's rigid interpretation of the provisions of the Fundamental Rights chapter

Fundamental Principles

These decisions, particularly the one in the Golaknath Case and that relating to the nationalised banks, have virtually rendered meaningless and impotent the Directive Principles which, the Constitution says, are not justiciable although "the principles therein laid down are nevertheless fundamental in the governance of the country and it shall be the duty of the state to apply these principles in making laws".

The Directive Principles not only envisage the right of the citizen to adequate means of livelihood, but also that the ownership and control of the material resources of the commu-

nity should be so distributed as best to subserve the common good, and that the operation of the economic system should not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment

When in furtherance of any of these principles the state seeks to enact laws, and it is found that the judiciary's interpretation of the Fundamental Rights is such as to enable it to strike down these laws, the question does arise whether there indeed is any way of carrying out these principles within the present framework of the Constitution. The judiciary has posed precisely this question by its decisions in the Golaknath Case and in the Banks case.

That neither the framers of the Constitution nor Parliament subsequently conceived of the Fundamental Rights inscribed into the Constitution as eternally valid and immutable, appears beyond doubt. To take the specific question of compensation for property to be acquired for public purposes, the Constitution-makers deliberately refrained from qualifying the term "compensation".

Sri Shetty sums up the position thus "The word 'compensation' has been left unqualified deliberately to impart flexibility to it, so that in cases of acquisition for 'social purposes' courts could respect the quantum of compensation which the legislature determines in conformity with the interests of the community, and in cases of acquisition for 'governmental purposes' the quantum could be examined to see if it is consistent with the

concept of minimum right to property"

That the take over of the biggest fourteen banks is for a "social purpose" can hardly be disputed. Thus, the quantum of compensation fixed or the principles prescribed therefor should have been considered beyond the competence of courts to go into, granting that there has been no attempt to play a fraud upon the Constitution which Parliament must be considered as anxious to protect as the judiciary is

But the Supreme Court has chosen to go into this question and even insist that the compensation paid should be immediately available to the companies concerned to do other business. In arriving at this conclusion the Court has put forward the strange theory that a principle laid down by Parliament for determining compensation for property to be acquired is not conclusive, on the ground that if this view is accepted "Parliament will be invested with a character of arbitrariness"

Social Values

The Court went into the details of computation of the compensation payable and gave its own findings. It must be noted here that in the case of agrarian reforms there has been no such finding by the Supreme Court, the difficulty has arisen mainly in respect of urban property. Of course, in the case of agrarian reform measures like the abolition of zamindari, the First Amendment Act of 1951 provided ample safeguard against judicial interference.

Sri Shetty comes to the unexceptionable conclusion, after discussing the differing viewpoints that the Fundamental Rights listed in Part III "are not so much rooted in the doctrine of natural law as they are based on the social values of society". Granted this premise, it is easy enough to see that the social values of a society are not static and permanent but dynamic and constantly changing, and that the concept of Fundamental Rights should necessarily change to keep pace with the requirements of the times.

Fundamental Rights cannot be insulated either from the Directive Principles which are the very foundation of the new society which the founding fathers envisaged for this nation or from Parliament's amending power; this position has been supported by some of our most eminent jurists

Clear Distinction

The Supreme Court itself did not travel far from this position in the early years. In the *Shankar Prasad Case*, the Court made a clear distinction between Constitutional law and ordinary law, and rejected the theory of immutability of Fundamental Rights. Subsequently, in the *Sajjan Singh Case*, the Court observed that "it is legitimate to assume that the Constitution-makers knew that Parliament should be competent to make amendments in these rights so as to meet the challenge of the problems that may arise in the course of socio-economic progress and development of the country".

But, in the *Golaknath Case*, by a six-to-five decision, the Court over-ruled the proposition laid down in the earlier decision and held that the Fundamental Rights had a transcendental position and were thus beyond the reach of the amending power of Parliament. In this case the Court saw no distinction between ordinary law and Constitutional law.

Sri Shetty points out, in assessing these judgements, that the inclusion of Fundamental Rights was intended to serve two purposes: first, "to secure the life and liberty of the people against arbitrary acts of the Government and not to keep the rights beyond state regulations and reasonable restrictions"; and secondly, "to remove suspicion from the minds of members of minority communities and offer them sufficient safeguards". He describes the theory of "reserved rights" (connoting paramountcy of rights) as "non-existent".

Even in the *Golaknath Case*, the Court indirectly conceded the point by suggesting that the Fundamental Rights could be amended by a Constituent Assem-

bly summoned by Parliament acting under its residuary power. Sri Shetty says: "This very admission of amendability of Fundamental Rights disproves the earlier assertion that they are transcendental in character". Thus, "it is difficult to subscribe to the view that the Fundamental Rights remain in the same form in which they were adopted and radiate the same meaning which they did at the time of their inclusion in the Constitution, for all time to come".

The view that Fundamental Rights must be interpreted in the light of the Directive Principles and the changing social values of society appears quite sound. Fundamental Rights should not be so interpreted as to obstruct the state from carrying out the injunctions in the Directive Principles. This approach, the author says, "is in consonance with the intentions of the framers of the Constitution".

He also explains why the Directive Principles were made unenforceable by the Constitution makers: this has been done "not to render them ineffective but only to forestall an attempt by citizens to compel the State to implement them immediately or at a time when it is not financially and administratively ready for it".

Nevertheless, the fundamental character of Part IV as the basis for State action was not left in any doubt. "According to the framers of the Constitution, Part IV is an Instrument of Instruction from the ultimate sovereign, the people of India, to the state, which is a creature of the Constitution established by them. Consequently, if the legislative and executive wings of the State are duty bound to carry them into effect, it is doubtful if the judicial wing of the state could ignore them with impunity".

The conflict, in fact, is between the "rights" of the minority of "haves" and the vast majority of "have-nots" who are equal in the eyes of the Constitution as citizens of the country. The Directive Principles make it clear that the aim is to remove the disparities between the two, and enable the people as a whole to

exercise their rights and enjoy their privileges more or less equally.

It clearly follows that legislation aimed at radical changes in the rural or urban economic structure is a necessary and inevitable corollary to the acceptance of the Directive Principles. If by such measures the property rights of a few individuals are curtailed, they also enable "more people than hitherto to exercise the right in society"; such legislation "which curtails but does not wipe off the property rights of a few individuals, and which renders the right meaningful to larger sections of people, can hardly be said to infringe the Fundamental Rights unless Part III is deemed to have perpetuated the rights of a few individuals".

In the context of a growing society and the unfulfilled aspirations of the vast majority to a decent living and social and economic equality, there can be no other interpretation of the Fundamental Rights than that put forward succinctly by Sri Shetty, namely, that they reflect social values and must keep pace with the changes in these.

Social Needs

Parliament has kept this position in view throughout, although it has at no stage gone far enough to meet the needs of Indian society. Even the three amendments to Article 31 were made merely "to reflect the original intentions of the Constitution-makers more fully". What Parliament was free to do to bring about essential land reforms, according to the judiciary, it is not free to do in respect of changes in the urban and industrial fields.

Referring specially to the *Golaknath Case*, the author says: "This decision, while it assigns a key position to the judiciary in all socio-economic measures, whose will or decision would in future decide the tempo of progress of reforms in India, has rendered Parliament, which is supposed to represent the will of the people from time to

(Continued on page 35)

New Interest in India

M. S. N. MENON

IT is said that West Germany is a political pigmy and an economic giant. It is indeed an irony that some West Germans should bemoan this, for it was the will to become an economic giant that led Germany to unleash two World Wars in this century.

West Germany has now become what it wanted, but of course at a price. Like Faust, it had to sell its soul—its political soul. And that is why it is a political pigmy. Had it been otherwise, West Germany could have played a useful role in this world.

Enormous Benefits

It still can—in the economic sphere, but as all giants, either in legend or history, it has chosen to throw its weight about for its own advantage. Thus, history continues to thwart the German people of an honourable place in human history for which they are fitted by their industry and intelligence.

Today, West Germany does not count in the world's affairs, just as Britain has ceased to count, for both countries are part of the Western alliance under American leadership. The voice of West Germany, naturally, is muted, because silence is golden. It brings enormous benefits. Thus, we can expect no foreign policy initiative on the part of West Germany that is not permitted by America and the Western alliance.

India and the newly free nations, therefore, find in West Germany neither sympathy nor support for their aspirations. What these nations want above all is peace, because this alone

can provide them respite to reconstruct their nations. But West Germany counted on war for reversing the results of the last war. At least this was so when the Dulles-Adenauer entente existed. The legacy has not disappeared yet.

The newly free nations want a new world economic order free from exploitation and colonial vestiges. West Germany could have shown an enlightened policy in this regard. Being the second richest nation in the world, it has the capacity to do so. But, here, too, it has followed its selfish interest.

It is natural that West Germany has little goodwill in these parts of the world to draw upon. In fact, the growing cooperation between West Germany and China in the industrial and military spheres has created great concern not only in India but in other Asian countries as well. This factor certainly will influence the attitude of the Asian countries in their attitude to East Germany.

India's Disappointment

Have all these facts lost their relevance now that Bonn has a Social Democratic Government? Hardly. In fact, Willy Brandt is as much committed to the Western alliance as his predecessors. But he can certainly play in the economic sphere a more enlightened policy which is denied to him in the political sphere.

If the performance of Dr Herman Abs and the West German economic delegation during their recent visit to India is any indication of a "new" West German economic policy to

this country, then India is disappointed. West Germany has not only proved its capitalist faith but also its identity of purpose with other capitalist countries.

To talk of "irritants" to West German private investment in this country, which Dr Abs did, while shutting the doors of West Germany to our products, is an affront.

Of course, it could not have been otherwise, for Dr Abs, as Chairman of the Deutsche Bank, the biggest private bank in West Germany, represents the cream of West German Big Business.

His bank controls one-third of the joint stock capital of West Germany as also some of the largest business groups, like Siemens, Mannesman, Hoesch, Volkswagen, Krupps, and others. The Bank's annual turnover reaches 17,500 million dollars, and it is connected with such powerful international banking interests like the Morgans, Rockefellers and the Rothschilds.

Private Investment

West German private investment in this country is, of course, small—about Rs 61.7 crores (by March 1967). This represents five per cent of all foreign private investment in this country, while the share of Britain and the USA is 47.7 per cent and 25.2 per cent, respectively. And, in turn, this represents two per cent of all West German private investment abroad totalling more than Rs 3,100 crores.

The visit of Dr Abs and Herr Walter Scheel, the Foreign Minister of West Germany, shows an intensified West German interest in this country. There are, of course, both political and economic reasons for it.

The main political purpose, obviously, is to block Indian recognition of East Germany. The West German economic interests in India stem from a variety of reasons, the most important one being the need for new investment and trade expansion for West Germany's growing surplus capital and production.

The West Germans had a clear advantage over their competitors

when the mark was undervalued. Now that it has been revalued, this advantage has disappeared. Competition is bound to be tough in the Western markets. West Germany wants new markets. And according to all trade forecasts, world trade is somewhat slowing down. West Germany wants to insure itself against this contingency.

It is also true that West Germany is interested to capture part of the Asian markets before they are swallowed up by Japan.

By 1950, West Germany was already the second leading industrial power in the West. And it has piled up a total export surplus of 100,000 million marks by now. This was the price for its political soul. The secret of West German success is its huge surplus. It exports 20 per cent of its production. This, of course, is a new trend among Western nations—to produce for export.

Capital Export

This vast trade surplus has now begun to poison its economy. There is inflation as also full employment, and costs are rising. The only solution is to let the steam off, that is, export capital. By 1967, West German investment abroad was already 52,700 million marks, of which private capital accounted for 25,000 million marks and state capital 27,000 million marks. Of this total foreign investment, two-thirds has been placed in the developing countries (DM 34,900 million) of which DM 20,000 million is state capital and the rest private capital.

The West German investment abroad is mostly confined to manufactures, because the USA, Britain and France are already heavily entrenched in mining. Unlike Britain and the USA, West Germany is more interested in technical collaboration. This promotes its exports and brings other benefits.

There are already 480 collaboration agreements between India and West Germany, the third largest, of which about 270 have gone into production. West German aid began with the

assistance to build the Rourkela Steel Plant in 1958.

The West German collaborations are concentrated in the manufacturing sector—in machines, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, metal and metal products, transport equipment, electricals, machine tools, and agriculture. A large number of these collaborations are not strictly collaborations, but are subsidiaries of West German firms, such as Siemens, BASF India, NGEF, Telefunken and others.

West Germany is also engaged in agricultural development along the hill areas, mostly in horticultural development—in Mandi (Himachal Pradesh) and Almora (UP). Certainly a great deal has been done in this field, but one would like to know why these collaborations are allowed along the sensitive border regions.

Dr Abs, while on his visit, raised a number of problems facing West German private investment in this country. The West Germans want "some security of reasonable content" for their investments to ensure a return on patents, technical knowhow and trade marks. They do not want a situation to arise when the Indian collaboration would lead to competition with the parent company in its established markets.

Three-Way Return

They want a three-way return—from domestic sales, from sales in third countries, and possible sales in the home market. They felt that the five-year restriction on technical collaborations and "low" rates of royalty are obstructions. They are worried over the Government's reluctance to have West German technicians occupying key jobs in the collaboration projects. They are unhappy over the restriction on majority equity participation by foreign firms.

They want freedom of choice in the selection of Indian partners. They do not want India to alter the present collaboration terms. Dr Abs made a point that India must give as good terms as are offered by other countries and he mentioned Latin America. The

West Germans are against the revision of the patent laws proposed by the Government of India. Indeed, this is a formidable list of demands. And there were many others.

But what are the facts? The Government of India has allowed majority participation in essential cases. Royalty payments have been extended to ten years in deserving cases, and already high.

The West German firms make super profits by selling machinery to this country, they get royalty, fee for technical services and profit according to equity holding.

Peculiar Feature

The West Germans resist the use of indigenous equipments, for they prefer turn-key jobs. It was this factor which made the Government turn down an offer to build an aluminium plant by the West Germans. India offers a very high profit rate. Dividend earnings of foreign capital in India average 13.7 per cent, while the average for the West is only 10 per cent.

A peculiar feature of West German private investment in India is that collaborations are started as purely technical assistance, but when the project succeeds, the West German partner converts his dues into equity holdings. Thus, no risk is taken by him.

India offers a base to the foreign firms to exploit the Asian market. A wide range of tax concessions are offered such as the eight per cent exemption on profits for companies engaged in priority items, tax holiday for new industrial ventures, development rebate, etc. Certain categories of foreign technicians are exempt from tax on salaries for a period, while no tax is charged for earnings upto Rs 4,000.

In many cases it has been found that the West German collaborator is not using the latest technology available with the parent company. An old technology would be adequate for the Indian market, but it fails when products are to be exported. Most of the collaborations have restrictive clauses on exports, use of patents, etc. but more so in the

case of UK and West Germany. In short, economic development of the country is not the first objective of these collaborations, but only a by-product

Of course, Indo-West German trade is the obvious example of West German indifference to the problems of developing countries. India's trade deficit with West Germany during the last 20 years is over Rs 1404.89 crores (till March 1969)

India's exports to West Germany have risen from Rs 10.9 crores in 1950 to Rs 26.5 crores by 1968-69. The point is that our exports to East Germany is rising much faster

The Common Market tariffs and quotas come in the way of larger exports from India to West Germany, but even within these limitations the quotas can be increased. Dr. Abs confessed that India's export to West Germany is low, and that "we are sure more could be done to take Indian goods".

Indian exports to West Germany are still confined to the traditional items. The manufactured goods hardly find a place in the export list. Of course, the West German delegation expressed the view that certain components manufactured by West German collaborations could be exported

With a total aid of Rs 850.99 crores, West Germany ranks next to the Soviet Union. But as was mentioned earlier, this entire aid has been wiped out by the huge trade deficit of Rs 1404.89 crores. India's debt repayment obligation to West Germany at the end of August 1969 was Rs 510.54 crores after Rs 237.17 crores of the principal and Rs 123.38 crores in interest had been paid. As a result of the recent revaluation of the mark, the debt has increased by 9.3 per cent.

West German official aid is mostly tied aid, that is, we are obliged to buy only from West Germany. The Government is anxious to untie part of the future aid. How the West Germans respond to this will determine their real aims of aid.

The fact is that the current volume of West German aid at 250 million DM is largely spent

in debt servicing and similar payments

The India Investment Centre of Bombay, a private organisation, has been very active of late to promote West German private investment in this country. What are the prospects? A great deal will depend on West Germany's attitude to the problems of developing countries

If it is more sympathetic, there is considerable scope for mutual cooperation. If it wants more concessions, they cannot be given, for India is anxious to revise the terms of collaborations. The fate of the oil giants is there for all to see. If there are irritants, they are on either side. And if there are benefits, they should be mutual.

BOOK REVIEW : WHOSE RIGHTS ?

(Continued from page 32)

time, ineffective with respect to such matters."

Recalling the American parallel in the New Deal period, Sri Shetty pertinently quotes an American thinker who said at that time: "If five lawyers can negative the will of 100,000,000 men, then the art of government is reduced to the selection of those five lawyers." Substitute "ten" for "five" and "500 million" for "100 million", and the position here is brought out.

The essence of the situation is that either Parliament should be able to assert itself in order to be able to carry out the Directive Principles in terms of legislative enactment and enforcement, or the judiciary should be made to act in keeping with the needs and aspirations of the people.

The question of compensation is only a test in this sense by taking a rigid view on this issue the Court today is in a position to block effective radical economic measures, for no exchequer can satisfy the concept of "just equivalent" or "market value" of property to be acquired for social purposes, to insist on such compensation is to obstruct the

people's progress on the basis of outdated and irrelevant ideas.

Peaceful democratic change in favour of the masses of our people is possible only when Parliament and the judiciary act in consonance with each other and in the spirit of the Directive Principles. What is at stake is not merely the acquisition of some private property here or there, but the faith of the people in the validity and fruitfulness of the democratic system itself.

If the Constitution cannot be changed to meet the needs of the times, the alternative can only be frustration and anger among the people, and this can have unforeseeable consequences for the future of the country. If our judges cannot be made to see what is plainly in view, it would indeed be necessary to think in terms of the Government exercising its prerogative to ensure that the judiciary does not act as a powerful element of obstruction. To quote Sri Shetty, "any judicial obscurantism in this field is fatal to the peaceful working of the constitutional methods."

C N Chittu Ranjan

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MOSCOW ATTACKS WEST ON CHINA

Recently, the Western press has been writing about the possibility of a Sino-Soviet War. Harrison Salisbury has written a book on the subject and articles in the British press have been reproduced in this country. The following article, which appeared in Pravda (February 15) refuting these speculations is written by a distinguished Soviet-Specialist on Chinese affairs, who is a member of the Kutznetsov delegation now negotiating in Peking. This article quoted in Western despatches from Moscow has not appeared in full in Indian press.

Geopolitical Incantations

S. TIKHVINSKY

“CONFRONTED by the increasing strength of socialism internationally, imperialists are attempting to weaken the unity of the world socialist system. They use the differences in the international revolutionary movement, in an attempt to introduce dissent, it uses its ideological machine, including the mass media, to serve anti-communism in the struggle against socialism, against all progressive forces” (Extract from the *Resolution of the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in 1969*)

One comes to feel the justice and vital nature of these words especially keenly when one reads some of the publications which have become particularly current of late in the West and especially in the USA and Britain. These are publications whose authors invent all kinds of lies about the supposed “Soviet threat” to China and at the same time declare that the People’s Republic of China would “benefit” immensely from establishing friendship with the USA.

The *Times*, of London, for instance, at the beginning of February, featured a series of articles on the topic.

These emphasised in every way that the sympathies of the *Times*, which has long been notorious for its hostility to communism, are completely with the Peking leaders who are supposed to be very peaceful, but, according to Neville Maxwell, the paper’s commentator, are confronted by a “realistic and deadly threat” on the part of the USSR.

These articles in the paper are an echo of some equally provocative statements in the *Washington Post*. In its issue of February 9 the paper said that “Soviet troops are deployed for an attack on Red China”. It added that the “Russians are also thinking of using nuclear weapons”.

Other US newspapers, which have suddenly developed sympathies for the present leadership of the People’s Republic of China, are turning out similar statements.

This is a case of another and obviously provocative manoeuvre by the imperialist propagandists aimed at disrupting the normalisation of relations between the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China and at the same time against the cause of international peace and security including countries where anti-Soviet propagandists are at work.

Perhaps this new propaganda action of our ideological opponents is best seen when we open a

recently published book by the well-known American columnist of the *New York Times*—Harrison Salisbury—a book with the flashy title of *Coming War Between Russia and China*.

The bourgeois press in the West has started, as if by command, praising this book and featuring numerous laudatory reviews and advertising its author as an experienced “Sovietologist”. The British *Guardian*, for instance, pointed out that “the author has known the Communist world for 20 years, because 20 years ago he went to Moscow as his paper’s correspondent”. It goes on to say, “in his forecasts he proceeds from the knowledge of the Russians which he obtained in this period and from his knowledge of their views during subsequent visits to the Soviet Union”.

Yet, the “forecasts”, with which the author has so abundantly provided his book certainly do not conform to these bits of the widely broadcast praise but look rather like some wishful thinking by a medicine man—they are not at all like a sober and objective analysis of the prospects of development of the current international situation.

Apparently Salisbury was very hasty in taking up his pen and dishing up a book under the influence of certain quarters which are afraid of a possible relaxation of tension in relations between the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China. One can see from the very name of the book that the author wants to convince the reader of the inevitability of an armed clash between the USSR and the People’s Republic of China.

The social “order” which is being fulfilled by the author is rather a delicate one: with his book, on the one hand, he appeals to the US ruling quarters “not to miss an opportunity” and, using the tension in Soviet-Chinese relations, to urgently normalise American-Chinese relations, on terms advantageous for America. On the other hand, his book is addressed to the nationalist-minded elements among the present leaders of the People’s Republic of China. It generously supplies them with all kinds of anti-Soviet lies and concoctions such as the threat of a “preventive” Soviet nuclear attack on China, and tries to convince them that the only way of saving themselves from the assumed Soviet threat is to establish close cooperation with the USA.

Salisbury does not go to great pains to convince the American reader that his prophesies and

"forecasts" are right. The arguments with which he tries to impress the "average" American are reduced to the extensive quoting and retelling of anti-Soviet sallies in today's Chinese periodicals, of official utterances, hostile to the USSR and CPSU, by the Peking leadership and of the crazy nationalistic ratiocinations of anonymous Chinese "interlocutors" whom Salisbury met in swanky restaurants in Hongkong and Macao.

As for the political patterns that the author of the book intends for the eyes of the Chinese leadership they are far from novel, even though they are worthwhile noting in greater detail.

The author takes no trouble to hide the fact that he is a true partisan of Sir Halford Mackinder's school of geopolitics. Though he admits that the geopolitical "philosophy was always closely associated with the imperialist or continental cravings of one or another nation" and even disavows possible accusations that his outpourings as regards "China's lebensraum" may look like passages from a clumsily concocted Nazi propaganda gimmick, nevertheless he bases all his "arguments" and "prognostications" precisely on concepts of imperialist geopolitics, on the presumption that a collision in Asia between the USSR and China is "inevitable" and that the USA is the messiah, the only balancing factor that supposedly keeps the world on the tightrope between peace and war. In this the author treats commonly known facts in an absolutely carefree and, in places, inexcusable way.

Salisbury tries might and main to instill into his reader the idea that the Russians are "traditionally" suspicious of other nations and this is supposedly due to their geographical location and history. Viciously slandering the Soviet state's nationalities policy he "shores up" his inventions with this kind of "information": in Peking in the spring of 1969 "a" Soviet diplomat supposedly assured his Western colleague that the Europeans must jointly repulse the yellow Asian hordes, "someone" from among Russian officials in Khabarovsk told "a" British tourist that Kipling was right when he said that "East is East and West is West and the twain shall never meet", and so on and so forth.

In his bulky book Salisbury naturally found no place for an impartial exposition of facts relating to the traditional friendship between the peoples of the USSR and China. He has completely ignored the perennial Soviet effort on the international scene to deliver China from the oppression of imperialist powers, the policy of full equality that Soviet Russia has been conducting vis-a-vis China since the very inception of the Great October Revolution, and the Soviet renunciation of all unequal contracts and treaties earlier imposed on China by Tsarism, of all concessions, rights and privileges that the Russian bourgeoisie and bureaucracy had once acquired.

Salisbury deliberately fails to mention the fact that it was precisely the Soviet Union which was the first to appoint an envoy of ambassadorial rank to China in 1924, whereas the other powers "traditionally" looked down upon China as a second-rate power, sending to Peking envoys of only ministerial rank. Salisbury says nothing either about the fact that it

was only because the Soviet Union voiced a strong protest against the seizure of Manchuria in North-East China by the Japanese warlords in 1931, that all patriotic anti-Japanese forces in China rallied together. It was also the only country which gave effective help to embattled China between 1937 and 1941.

Although Salisbury is compelled to admit that during those years the Soviet Union sent China tanks, aircraft, fuel, arms and ammunition, volunteer pilots and experienced military advisers, such as Chuikov, Rybalko, Zhigarev and others, even here he cannot abstain from an anti-Soviet attack and complains that all that aid was meant for Chiang Kai-shek and the National Government rather than the Communists. It appears that he clearly counts on his American readers being unaware of the fact that at that time there was in China a single front against the Japanese invaders, and it is precisely this policy of a single front between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party of China that was implemented with the Soviet Union's vigorous support. It is common knowledge that it bore fruit, thwarting the Japanese military plans and preventing China's surrender.

It would be interesting to ask Mr Salisbury what would the situation in the Pacific theatre have been like, had the National Government of China, left without the support of the Soviet Union, capitulated to the Japanese as early as in 1938 or 1939? Incidentally, it is permissible to remind Mr Salisbury of the fact that it was precisely in those years that the United States, just like Britain, actively supplied Japan with strategic military raw materials, including aviation fuel for the aircraft making bombing raids on Chinese cities, and raw materials for the aviation industry.

The Soviet Army, which routed the hand-picked one million strong Kwantung army of Japan in 1945, made a great contribution to the national liberation struggle the Chinese people were waging. However hard Salisbury may try to cast aspersions on the Soviet Union's entry into the war against militarist Japan on the strength of its allied commitments, he does not succeed. Therefore he resorts to another provocation when he writes that the Soviet troops in the autumn of 1945, in spite of all their efforts, were unable to reach Peking and Port Arthur before Japan's actual surrender.

It is well known that the Soviet Army in the course of the military campaign in the Far East had by no means set itself the task of entering Peking. The strategic aim of the forthcoming military operations was to rout the Japanese Kwantung army in Manchuria and Korea, and also the Japanese forces in South Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands, which was bound to expedite Japan's capitulation.

Similarly incorrect is Salisbury's assertion regarding Port Arthur. Troops were airlifted to the cities of Port Arthur and Dalny on August 22, 1945. As soon as the first plane landed at Port Arthur, a crowd of Chinese and Koreans came to the airfield to give valuable information about the Japanese garrison stationed in the city. The Soviet command made use of the information and the enemy garrison

was quickly disarmed. The entry of the Red Army units into Port Arthur developed into a festival of friendship between the Soviet and the Chinese peoples. On August 24, units of the 6th Tank Army of the Guards arrived in Port Arthur by rail.

It would be pointless to look through in Salisbury's book for objective testimonies of the enormous fraternal and disinterested assistance from the Soviet people to the young People's Republic of China during the first ten years of its existence. Salisbury does not say a word about the fact that 256 large industrial projects, which have been the kernel of the Chinese industry to this very day, were built with Soviet technical assistance during those years, that Soviet instructors trained more than 20,000 specialists with a higher education in Soviet and Chinese higher educational establishments, that the Soviet Union, during all those years, ensured the defence of the legitimate interests of the Chinese people at the international level. All these things are "forgotten" by Salisbury when he furiously defends the thesis of the allegedly eternal and irreconcilable animosity between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China.

As it has already been indicated, Salisbury's purpose is to prevent the normalisation of the Soviet-Chinese relations. Salisbury does not conceal the fact that he is horrified at the idea of the Soviet-Chinese friendship being restored, which, as he puts it, would confront the United States with the gravest foreign policy crisis of all—the prospect of facing a billion or 1.2 billion Chinese and Russians armed with nuclear weapons of the most overwhelming order, the latest war material, a colossus occupying the Eurasian continent.

Another admission made in this connection by the author is also not accidental. He writes that such prospects really make one shudder, and that it was this horrible possibility that prodded the Americans to welcome Chinese-Soviet animosity.

Salisbury is only too ready to snatch up any anti-Soviet pronouncements by the Peking leaders. He admits that at times it seems as though the Chinese propaganda is directed equally against Moscow and Washington, but in all their talks the Chinese officials draw a sharp demarcation between China's attitude towards Russia and the United States. Callers take their leave of such conversations, Salisbury goes on to say, feeling that the difference between Russia and China is one of principle, whereas that between China and the United States is superficial and is almost entirely related to Taiwan.

Salisbury falsifies the history of Russo-Chinese border demarcations. He repeats the nationalist Chinese propagandists' slanderous concoctions about the imaginary "exploitation" of China by the Soviet Union, about certain "territorial seizures" by the USSR in China, and mythical Soviet claims to Chinese lands. At the same time, he endeavours to justify the chauvinistic, hegemonic policy of territorial claims by the Chinese nationalists on the Soviet Union and the Mongolian People's Republic.

At the same time Salisbury tries, in every possible way, to prove the possibility and the need for the

establishment of friendly relations between China and the United States. With this aim in mind, he alleges that the US-Chinese differences are of a temporary, transitional nature, and that they only sprang up in 1950, after the US occupation of Taiwan.

At this point, the author completely "forgets" to mention the many US bases near the People's Republic of China, the stationing of the US troops in South Korea, and other "trifles" of this kind, which provide a threat to China. This "forgetfulness" helps Salisbury to maintain silence over the problem of the fundamental difference between the interests of the Chinese people and the criminal aspirations of US imperialism.

Salisbury devotes considerable space to his geopolitical discourses on the Mongolian People's Republic. He pertly declares that Mongolia should be neutralised, and, if possible, brought into alliance with China. Incidentally, it should be mentioned here that Salisbury is not the only one to encroach upon the national sovereignty of the Mongolian People's Republic. Recent years have seen many organs of the capitalist press circulating reports, which are far from the truth and pursuing the object of discrediting the international prestige of the Mongolian People's Republic. Not so long ago, the Mongolian newspaper, *Unen*, spiked the provocative UPI report of December 22, 1969, distorting the real situation in the Mongolian People's Republic and endeavouring to create a wrong impression about the People's Mongolia among the public of many countries of the world.

In his book, Salisbury bluntly urges the United States to meddle in Soviet-Chinese affairs. If the United States wants to play a major part in the Chinese-Soviet dispute, he writes, it should set up viable relations with China. As Salisbury sees it, the object of the US interference is to make its influence felt in Peking and, thus, counterbalance Moscow.

In the final analysis, this voluminous geopolitical incantation fits in nicely with the desires of the imperialist circles, and boils down to the primitive purpose of scaring the Chinese leaders with the bogey of a Soviet threat and push the People's Republic of China into the embraces of the United States.

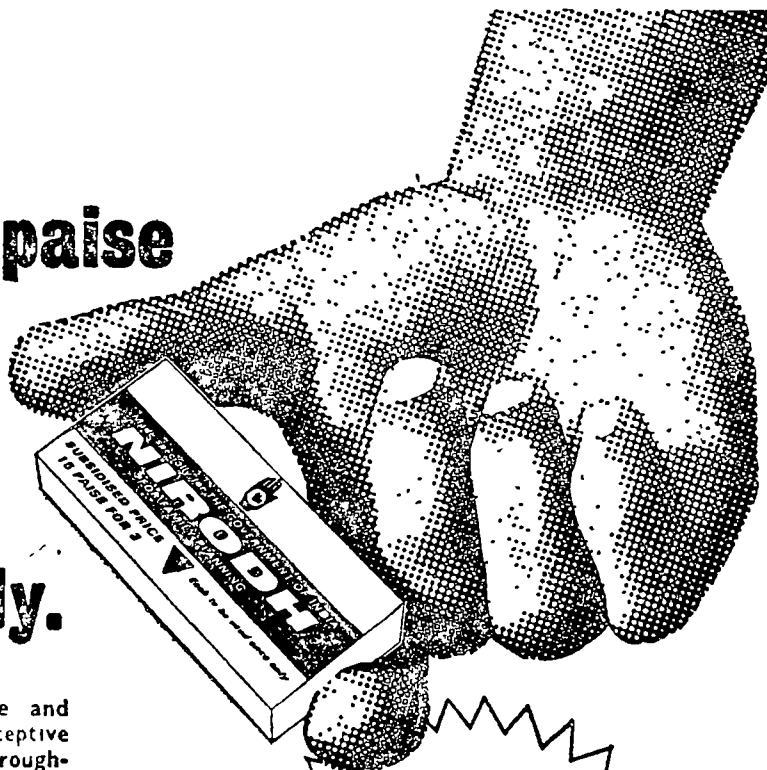
In his speech at the International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties on June 7, 1969, L. I. Brezhnev observed that "extreme aggressive circles often influence the shaping of policy in the big capitalist states. To curb the activity of these circles it is necessary to be firm, to expose their intrigues and provocations and be constantly ready to administer a determined rebuff to aggressive encroachments. This is the foreign policy that the CPSU and the Soviet Union pursue".

Attempts to distort and present the Soviet Union's peaceful foreign policy as "aggressive", are in vain. It is based rather on relations with other states on principles of respect for their sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the non-use of force. The whole world is aware that the Soviet Union is doing everything to encourage good neighbourliness (according to these principles), with the People's Republic of China as well. This is in accordance with the interests of both countries and the entire socialist camp.



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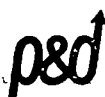
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Some Lessons to Chandigarh

SATYAPAL DANG

ALL progressives are perturbed—and rightly so—at the events that took place in Haryana following the Government of India's decisions regarding Chandigarh and Fazilka, and at the widespread adverse reaction in Punjab, too, regarding the same decisions.

Knowing the game of Right reaction and its determination to exploit all parochial and regional issues, they (the progressives) are keen that there should be no more agitation and counter-agitation in Punjab and Haryana on the question of boundaries. In this anxiety, some of them are out to prove the "correctness" of the decisions of the Government of India *any how* and towards that end are conveniently disregarding facts.

Communal Influence

Here are a few instances. The weekly *Link*, immediately following the decisions, carried a long report regarding the matter. In this report, areas of Fazilka proposed to be transferred to Haryana were declared to be Hindi-speaking. A long "Letter to the Editor" in the *National Herald* of February 19, 1970, makes the same points.

There is no doubt that according to 1961 census figures, the area in question is Hindi-speaking. But surely all progressives by now know that 1961 census figures do not reflect the truth because under communal influence many—perhaps a big majority—of Punjabi-speaking Punjab Hindus wrongly stated their mother-tongue to be Hindi.

If one is to go by 1961 census figures, those who are defending the decision regarding Fazilka as

entirely correct, will have to oppose the decision regarding Chandigarh. Though actually overwhelmingly Punjabi-speaking, according to 1961 census figures, even Chandigarh is Hindi-speaking and on that basis should have gone to Haryana and not to Punjab.

Some have even dug up a report of a six-man subcommittee appointed many years ago in connection with the demarcation of the Punjabi and Hindi regions of the composite Punjab. It is said that the subcommittee unanimously accepted this area of Fazilka to be Hindi-speaking.

Even if this were so, it would not be in accordance with actual reality. In fact it is not so.

Only three members agreed with this proposition—two were from Haryana area and the third was Giani Kartar Singh, the Akali leader. Sri Pratap Singh Kairon and two other members did not endorse the view.

Sikh Majority

As far as Giani Kartar Singh is concerned, it must be remembered that the dominant Akali leadership at that time was keen that as much of Hindu majority Punjabi area as possible should go out of Punjabi Suba so that there would be as big a majority of Sikhs in Punjabi Suba as possible. Progressives cannot afford to lose sight of this fact.

Mainstream has fallen a prey to the same errors as mentioned above, and more. The following is from an article "Chandigarh and Beyond" by NC, which appeared in February 7, 1970, issue.

"Fazilka Tehsil, as it was previously demarcated, was a predominantly Hindi-speaking area, this was conceded in important official documents at the time of late Pratap Singh Kairon. However, when the Akalis came to power, they redrew the map of the Tehsil in such a way that the contiguity of Fazilka with the Haryana border could be removed while another chunk from the neighbouring Punjab territory was added to the Tehsil to make it appear as predominantly Punjabi. It is to rectify the shrewd move of the Akali Ministry that Central Government communiqué provided for the Hindi-speaking area of the Fazilka Tehsil, together with a small corridor taken out of the neighbouring Muktsar Tehsil, to be linked to Haryana."

"Important official documents at the time of late Pratap Singh Kairon", are not specified. We are aware of only one (besides 1961 census figures) and we have already dealt with the same.

It is not at all correct that the Akalis-in-power redrew the map of Fazilka Tehsil. Akalis were in power for the first from February to November 1967 as a part of the United Front Ministry, and they came to power again in February 1969. No redrawing of map of Fazilka has been done at any time after January 1967.

In fact, whatever redrawing was done was during the time of late Kairon or earlier. Since the just principle for deciding demarcation is to take village as a unit and not Tehsil, it is not necessary to discuss the justness or otherwise of any redrawing done by Sri Kairon or earlier.

Akalis have not only not done the redrawing attributed to them by NC, but would not even be interested in the same as they have been, and are perhaps even now, keen to get rid of as many Hindu majority areas as possible to increase the Sikh majority in Punjabi Suba, notwithstanding their loud declaration to the contrary.

Let us now come to the main question: what is the truth about the part of the Fazilka Tehsil proposed to be transferred

which partly perpetuated the British policy of isolation as a matter of unavoidable strategy for protecting this economically weak community from the onslaught of their advanced counterpart of the neighbouring plains.

(ii) Reorganisation of States in India, giving an incentive to the hill people to 'demand a State of their own

(iii) Organisation and demonstration of political demands as the means of fulfilling regional aspirations, both economic and otherwise, as found in the plain areas in free India

(iv) Utter neglect and apathy of the country's major political parties, specially the Congress and the Communist parties, in expanding their wings in the hill areas before and after Independence. The majority means of modern bonds have, therefore, remained ineffective in the hills till today.

(v) Miserable neglect of road development in the hills and the indifference of the Indian Press in focussing the life and society of the people of the hills and the plains. The horizontal and vertical communications between the hills and the plains are still left undeveloped.

There was an economic gap between the hill people and the plains people at the dawn of Independence as a legacy of British administration. There has also appeared a growing economic gap between the greater mass of the illiterate hill men (of the traditional society) and a very small middle class of the literate hill men in the post-Independence period

The benefits of development expenditure go largely to the latter than to the former. The educated group of the middle-class Garos has strengthened its position partly through Government agencies and the District Council, and partly through their alignment with the traditional authorities as placed in the context of economic disparities between the hills and the plains. In comparatively free political atmosphere under the national administration mostly manned by the non-hillmen, outside contractors and traders by virtue of their greater entrepreneurial ability and wealth, have been able to control the economic benefits, many a time avoiding local tensions through a partnership with the literate hillmen. The middle class has also been developing signs of absentee ownership, break-up of communal ownership of land, while the great mass is still in abject poverty practising Jhum cultivation and maintaining a bare subsistence level of living.

These forces will assume greater proportions in the small geographical area of the autonomous Hills State in the making, and the skill in social engineering of the statesmen and the educationists will be put to a great test in no great distance of time. Any peaceful process of advancement of the society as a whole to be pursued by them will invariably involve a lot of undoing of the past practices of the British authorities as the formation of the Hill State is both a result of and an opportunity to cure the faults and fallacies of the British administration and its legacies in Independent India.

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convert illiterate they learnt certain new values but were always pulled down to live by traditional values. This conflict only weakened the old values, Mahari loyalty, and generated a process of depreciation of interest in traditional culture—arts, songs and dances.

As a product of literacy and a new religious bond and outlook under the Baptist Mission, certain new forces were released to cause further changes in the society to suit the changing conditions. Organisation of public opinion for opening high schools, prayer for modification of the educational system and abolition of *Begai*, and organising district-wise support for the Garos under the leadership of Sonaram Sangma, were some of the instances which account for the growing consciousness among the literate Garos.

This growing awareness as well as acceptance of higher symbols for the Garo community in the making drove the literate Garos, already united under the British administration and in a new religious bond, to move towards a phase of subnationalism before the dawn of independence of the country.

Contradictions in Changed Context

When the stage was set for the literate Garos to emerge as the pioneers of progress in a British-made area of segregation, the country achieved Independence. The bulwark of isolation was broken and the liberated stream of the Garo life and energy made headway towards the mainstream of Indian life. The Garos met for the first time waves of non-Garos as agents of Government, traders and participants in all pursuits in Garo Hills. The former viewed the latter as the overwhelming forces of governance while the latter looked upon the former as a backward being away from Indian tradition and living in a world of primitive practices and prejudices. Naturally, in this context, an element of mutual suspicion and distrust developed below the apparently calm surface of social behaviour.

In this situation of mutual distrust, accentuated by economic disparities between the hills and plains the stage of subnationalism was advanced by the literate hillmen to that of infra-nationalism in their search for new symbols to bind the community of the literate and the traditional together, on the one hand, and for attaining an equal status with their fellow citizens of the plains, on the other. In the process, the literate drew in the support of the traditional authorities—Nokmas, Laskars, etc. through the Mahari bonds, and the primary school teachers through the religio-educational bonds. The creation of the autonomous District Council for the Garos, in recognition of their ways of life and genius as being quite distinct from that of the rest of the Indian society, was immediately taken up as a symbol for Garo nationalism. It served as an escalator for achieving higher political status. It now culminates in the formation of an autonomous hills State within along with the Khasi and Jaintia people as copartners and brothers in faith.

In Garo Hills, the Garos are not the only aboriginal people. They only make the majority tribe.

Other tribes—Hajongs, Koches, Rabhas, Dalus, Banais—constitute the aboriginal minority population, besides the non-tribal Bengalees, Nepalese and Muslims.

Other Areas of Conflict

In addition to inter-ethnic differences, there are other areas of conflicts and contradictions between these communities and the Garos, based on language, religion, customs, traditions and rules of inheritance, etc. The Garos got the benefit of first start in respect of education and modernisation whereas the other native groups were neglected both by the British authorities and the Baptist Mission, and remained a good deal more backward than the Garos (except the Bengalees). Common heritage and habitat of several centuries was broken by the British policy of segregating the Garos from the rest through various administrative measures. The Mission never opened any school in the areas of the so-called Hindu natives, *nor was it persuaded by the British Government to do the same* though education work of the district had been entrusted to the Mission in the early period of British administration. Hence a literacy gap, backed by religious difference, arose between the Garos and the non-Garos. Moreover all the flat lands suitable for normal cultivation are under the latter's control whereas the former controls the Jhum lands on the hills, an unsettling factor in their ways of life. Some vested interests entered into the non-Garo societies, bringing their lands under the farmer's financial control and/or leading them to a new area of political tension in the context of the Garos' predominance in the district. Another dimension of far-reaching consequences has now been added by the expansion of the Communist Party of India in the district, specially among the peasants and workers, and also in the context of the leader centric politics so far followed in Garo Hills.

Besides the historical, social and ethnic reasons, the unrest in Garo-Hills, specially in the post Independence period, has been predominantly due to disparities in economic development and the uneven distribution of material benefits between the people of the hills and the plains. Economic backwardness, though appeared sharply since Independence, is essentially the cumulative effect of the century-old regressive policies of the British administration. It could not be remedied in two decades of national administration, especially when the latter was characterised by the poor implementation of all the integrating economic and political principles and policies.

There exists a large economic content in the political aspiration of the Garos. It is again strengthened by the demonstrative effects of several contemporary political factors of which the important ones are

(i) Recognition of their separate social and economic status, and of the need for a separate treatment as found in the creation of the District Council. It has been a recognition by the Constituent Assembly representing the majority people of the country,

in the Mission's industrial department or in work projects provided by the missionaries. Government grants for teachers' pay, etc. were only Rs 1824 in 1875-78 and Rs 1400 in 1905. Teachers were paid, besides salaries, a capitation fee, an amount, paid at various rates per student promoted to higher class, and on the basis of the teacher's other attainments. The total Government grants for education in the district per year hardly exceeded Rs 3000 around 1905.

In 1905, this educational system was reviewed by Sir Bamfylde Fuller, who, for various reasons, considered it undesirable to leave matters any longer in the hands of the Mission. Searching observations were also made by Barrow, Inspector of Schools, Assam Valley and Hill Districts, in 1907, and by Cunningham, DPI Assam, in 1915. All were in favour of reformulating the educational policy in the district and suggested the reduction of missionary enterprise in the field of education.

Fuller decided "to stimulate" the Mission schools by establishing a number of Government schools, take over gradually the old schools under the Mission leaving to them the task of opening schools in the new areas, appointed inspecting staff to supervise the schools instead of the Missionary supervision, and established a Teacher's Training School for the output of better teachers. A few years later, the syllabus was also changed reducing the load of religious Teachings. In spite of all these measures, the Mission was still left in a pre-eminent position in the field of education. Village schools still remained under the active guidance of the Mission and secular trend made little impact.

Policy of Political Isolation

The British administration was started in Garo hills with its geographical exclusion from the rest of the British dominated India and the authorities insulated the district by several successive Acts and Regulations, flocked the only political relation existing between the Garos and the neighbouring zemindars and kept the hillmen almost secluded in an enclosure of British made enactments.

The education policy of the British authority was no less derogatory than their policy of territorial and administrative isolation as followed in the territory of the Garos. They evaded the entire responsibility only to avoid the initial difficulties. On the other hand, the educational policy of the Baptist Mission was subservient to its primary objective of spreading Christianity. Cunningham had observed "The curriculum is eccentric and unsuitable, and religion bulks so largely. Courses in history and Geography were irregular." Barrow remarked that the teachers in the village schools were ill-equipped and devoted much of their time to scripture teaching and "in their secular capacity were distinctly inefficient and the interests of education from a secular point of view suffered miserably."

The entire Garo society must remain indebted to the missionaries for pioneering the educational development of the inheritors of a turbulent head-

hunting race: but their contribution suffered from the absence of a secular teaching and literature, even though from the view point of their objective, they were eminently successful.

Upgrading of schools even in advantageous locations were hardly attempted either by the Government or by the Mission. Only in 1938 about seventy years after the British occupation of the district, a High English School was opened and that also under pressure of the public and the Government servants.

Sudden change of the script from Bengali to Roman reversed the trend built in about forty years, and a dislocation with consequent chaos in the field of education prevailed for several years. This change also kept off the Garos from the influence of the neighbouring Bengali and Assamese language and literature, and the danger of absorbing much of the so-called 'swadeshi evils' into Garo society during the days of Bengal Partition (1905) was avoided.

Conscious Alienation from Others

In its early stages, the British administration aimed at "reclaiming the tribe into civilisation" in a closely guarded territory of their own. But the gradual rise of the Swadeshi movement, specially during the first partition of Bengal, made the British authorities more conscious of its (movement) inroad into Garo society and drove them to close all avenues of communication between the Garos and the people of the plains areas. With that end in view, Bengali was dropped from the curriculum of studies, Bengali script was changed into Roman script, and road development was consciously avoided.

The only link and means of mixing of the Garos with plains people were a little business and trade carried on between them in the haats in foothills and plains belts, but the extremely isolationist policy diminished the prospects of the development of trade and business in these areas. All these measures, therefore, alienated the Garos from the mainstream of the national life.

While the missionaries were engaged in effecting a break with the "pagan" practices of the Garos, the British authority in its eagerness to avoid any amount of erosion of the primitive set up of the Garo society due to likely influx of the land hungry people from the plains, over-zealously helped preserve the original Garo way of life. Little importance was, therefore, given to the development of the Garos, especially in the field of education, communication and natural resources.

But the spread of literacy pushed the society into the vortex of conflicts and contradictions. It brought about a cultural gap between the literate and the illiterate. "Conversion to Christianity necessitates the denial of most of the crude customs and traditions of the old society—a change so sudden and sweeping that the Christian section possibly could not adapt itself to the changed order of things perfectly and is found to bear all pangs of transition." The literate constituted a minority section of the society and in the midst of the non-

the district to prevent entry of any person without licence and or the DC's prior permission for purposes of exploiting forest resources or catching elephants, etc. on payment of royalty, Elaborate rules were framed for these purposes under this Regulation specifically called Garo Hills Regulation of 1882

Neglect of Transport System

During the whole period of British rule, there existed no road system worth the name. This negligence, one may guess, was an inherent part of their segregation policy. Hence, the transport and communication system within the district also remained totally undeveloped for a long time. Only two roads provided an outlet towards Mymensingh and Goalpara plains. The district authorities did never put much stress on road development except on clearing certain bridle-paths or hilly tracts by a system of forced labour which till the other day was in vogue as *begar* system only to remind the Garos of the older British zoolum! These tracts were not even fit for carts. A weekly but uncertain bus service was started only during the last thirties under private initiative. As a result, trade and commerce was little developed within the district though it was rich in forest resources and cash crops, specially cotton. One of the prominent avenues of culture-contacts was not allowed to develop.

The British authority invited the American Baptist Mission to develop education among the Garos, and used to hand over the entire education grants to the Mission on condition that they would pay a certain amount and render reports. To them it was a free choice to be carried out predominantly at the Government cost. They, however, developed a school at Damra and simultaneously set up churches on the northern border, initially under the protection and encouragement of the Deputy Commissioner of Goalpara, trained batches of faithful workers for the propagation of their faith.

The Mission went on establishing some kind of composite institutions containing within their precinct a school, a church and medical facilities or means for training in hygiene and sanitation, all centering round the converted Garo teachers trained first in Damra School and then in Tura Station School. Three types of schools were developed in the district under the Missionary initiative—Tura Station School, village schools and the Sunday schools. The former trained the teacher-workers of the Mission for all the village schools. The buildings of the village schools were also used as village chapel. The Sunday schools were attached to village churches or Christian Sabhas and organized for the teaching of the scriptures.

Besides these schools under the exclusive missionary supervision, the Deputy Commissioner had to open a few Bengali medium schools with a different syllabus in the nineties of the last century in the vast plain areas inhabited by the non-Garos, where the Mission did not undertake any educational work for obvious reason.

The curriculum of studies included eight-year course in the Station School in which four years

each were spent in the normal and the primary departments. After completion of these courses, a student was supposed to have had eight years of Garo reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic and scriptures, seven years of Bengali reading, writing, grammar, arithmetic and geography, and three years of English reading, writing and grammar. From the lowest primary class the scriptures were taught daily in every class, besides military drill and vocal music. Geometry was taught before the primary stage was passed.

Before the beginning of Missionary education, Bengali and Garo were the mediums of instruction in all the schools, and Bengali script was used for teaching the Garo language. Around 1901, Bengali was finally dropped from the lower primary course of studies and made elective in the advance stage, and the script was also changed in favour of Roman. The Government gave a grant of Rs 1000 for the reprinting of books in Roman script.

Scant Attention to Language

The withdrawal of Bengali from the lower primary course helped the Garos to devote their energies more to studies in their mother tongue and achieve greater efficiency. But the growth of literature in Garo was deplorably slow. Of about 38 books published in Garo, four were Dictionaries by different compilers, three graded grammars, seven primers, four graded books on arithmetic, three sets of Sunday school lessons, four books on life of Christ, besides translations of catechism, Peep of Day, Hymns, and the Gospels and the Genesis. There was no elementary book on geography before 1900 and that on history was prepared even later. Bengali books were the only resort in the schools even after many years of withdrawing Bengali from the lower primary school course. No consistent effort was made by the British administration to develop the Garo language and make it an adequate medium of instruction. Nor could the Mission succeed in creating a variety in literature except on theology because of their preoccupation with organisational works, limitation of required kind of manpower, and above all, the creation of literature not being the primary objective of the Mission.

The expenses incurred on educational expansion were mainly borne by the Government with the Missionaries bearing a part of it. But the government grant and the money from the Mission was never sufficient for meeting the growing demand for education. The Mission then took up a policy of raising schools in those villages where people themselves were ready to provide accommodation, both for the school and the teacher, and admit larger number of pupils. This policy was taken up to manage the schools mostly with Government grants without spending much out of the Mission funds, on the one hand, and to make the people realise the importance of education, on the other. A few scholarships on the basis of tests and a few stipends were also given by the Government to enable a few students to read at the Station School. Rest of the students maintained themselves partially by working

from the High Court in the absence of any provision in the Regulation X of 1822, of excluding zemindars from the southern part of the district. The Government, therefore, amended the regulation, re-issued it in the form of Regulation XXII of 1869, and finally took over the tract on payment of compensation. It was placed in charge of the DC, Garo Hills Goalpara district was attached to Assam in 1826, but the common boundary between Goalpara and Garo Hills was ill-defined and uncertain till 1854.

When the Act of 1869 made Garo Hills a deregulationised (non-regulated) district, the Lt Governor, by virtue of the powers vested in him by that Act, wanted to extinguish the rights of the Zemindars over the tract lying between the Brahmaputra and the Hills, and ordered new survey of the boundary. For obvious reasons Backett, Officer-in-Charge of boundary demarcation, laid down a line beyond the earlier boundary and included within Garo Hills a considerable part of the land of the zemindars. They challenged such a unilateral extinction of rights given under the permanent settlement, and instituted civil suits in the courts. Finding no means of eliminating zemindars from the foot-hills and the adjacent plains, the Government entered into an agreement with the affected zemindars to maintain the Backett boundary and withdraw their control from within the Garo Hills as defined by the new boundary on payment of compensation and on condition that the Government would fix and collect revenue from that new portion, and pay 75 per cent of it to the zemindars except in the Mechpara "B" *mahal* where the zemindars would collect revenue fixed by the Government and deposit 15 per cent of it to the latter. Thus, the Garo Hills district was made free from the intermediary control in 1878.

Excluded Territory Special Powers

The Regulation X of 1822 had separated the areas of Goalpara, Dhubri and Karabari bordering on Garo Hills, exempted the Garos and other tribals from the operation of all General Regulations, and established special system of governance for the tract inhabited by them or bordering on their possessions. The Goalpara district was however, later removed and attached to Assam in 1826. The Act of 1869 defined the district of Garo Hills and repealed the Regulation of 1822, but, like the foregoing Act, removed the district from the jurisdiction of the civil, criminal and revenue courts and offices established under the General Regulations and Acts. This district was then attached to Assam after it had been formed into a separate administrative unit under a Chief Commissioner.

As the Inner Line Regulations could not be applied successfully in a tract like Garo Hills, surrounded by settled territories, so power was taken under Regulation I of 1876, to prevent the entry into Garo Hills for trading purposes of unlicensed persons and to control absolutely the acquisition of land by any outsider as it was to be governed by the tribal laws and customs. This prohibitory measure was,

however, applicable to all British subjects, who were not natives of Garo Hills. Regulation II of 1880 empowered the Chief Commissioner, with the previous sanction of the Governor-General in Council, to cancel the operation of any law in force in the district. Under its provisions, the operation of enactments relating to civil and criminal procedure, court fees, stamps, transfer of property and registration had been barred since 1884 and the Civil Procedure Code was never extended to the Hill districts. Later on some of the acts relating to the above subjects were, however, extended to Garo Hills in a limited sphere.

A very simple system of administering civil and criminal justice was introduced by a set of rules framed under section 6 of the Schedule District Act, XIV of 1874. Accordingly the Chief Commissioner himself was the chief appellate authority, and Deputy Commissioner exercised the combined powers of the District and Session Judge and Magistrate of the district.

Tribal-style Judicial Administration

The judicial administration in all petty civil and criminal matters was carried on by indigenous tribal agencies as well as by Laskars. Their procedure of work was free from legal technicalities, and the proceedings were not to be recorded in writing. Tribal laws and customs guided these agencies in settling disputes or dispensing justice within the framework of those rules. In the plains belt of Garo Hills, *Gaonburas* (village headmen) took the place of Laskars (excluding his revenue duties) without any cash remuneration but with the benefit of a fixed area of their landed property being exempted from revenue payment.

The police administration was also under the Deputy Commissioner. A small detachment was kept at the headquarters. No thanas were established in the Hills; only three outposts were maintained in the plains belt along the district border. Laskars, Sardars and Nokmas were directly held responsible for detection and prevention of crimes in the hills, and *Mauzadars*, *Mandals* and *Gaonburas* aided the district administration in police and other matters. *Mauzadars* were sometimes authorised to try petty cases in the plains belts.

As regards revenue administration, land and land revenue matters were conducted by the Deputy Commissioner under the executive orders of the Government within the framework of the isolationist enactments. Plain areas were assessed for land revenue whereas house taxes were realised from the Hill areas. Outsiders had no rights on land in the Hills, that is, in Akhing areas. No middlemen's interest was allowed to grow in the plains areas also. Yet, such interests in lesser dimension were not totally absent and often succeeded in escaping official scrutiny. The administration in respect of forest wealth, elephants, etc. was also conducted initially under the rules framed by the first Deputy Commissioner, and later on, under the orders of the Chief Commissioner till 1882. By a new Regulation of that year power was given to the Deputy Commissioner of

the Special Commissioner in charge of this area under the above Regulation with the authority to extend the British administration over the wild and till then unexplored interior of the Garo Hills. He entered into agreement with 121 Garo chiefs in the outer hills, and secured from them the promise of a payment of nominal tributes and in return offered them protection against the zemindars. Prominent Garo chiefs were appointed as *Laskars* to realise the tributes from their respective areas and preserve peace on behalf of the British authority in return for annual presents to them. The post of a local officer, *Garo Sarbarakai*, was also created. He was stationed at Singimari to look after the peace of the area and collect tributes from the Garo Laskars.

All the haats along the foothills were removed from control of the zemindars and brought under the direct Government control. Tolls of all kinds were abolished in this area except those upon the independent Garo frequenting them. In all other Garo areas still under the zemindars, Scott introduced a different principle of revenue administration. The zemindars were forbidden to collect revenues from the Garos. The Government took over this responsibility along with that of maintaining peace on condition that 75 per cent of the actual total collections would be paid to the zemindars and of the remaining 25 per cent, 13 per cent would be paid to the Laskars for the collection of revenue and maintenance of peace, and 12 per cent to be credited to the Government.

Enforcement of British Power

Revenue was also fixed by the Government at varying rates in the different areas in the Hills. No uniform rates or assessments ever prevailed in the early years of British administration. While the Garos were freed from the perpetual exploitation and control of the zemindars, they were asked to pay a nominal tribute in return for "protection" provided by the Government. Gradually, a large area, thus, came under the British control without any use of firearms.

The British Government, at first, maintained a thin cover of British supremacy over the outer hills and only tenuously controlled the affairs therein. Since 1866, a policy of indirect participation in its administration was continued from Goalpara till the sixties of that century when recurring Garo raids offered an opportunity to the Goalpara authorities to conduct a series of police actions into the Hills. In 1866, Garowana, was constituted as a separate administrative unit and Lieutenant set up the present headquarters of Tura in 1867 in the heart of Hills. Since then the era of direct administration was inaugurated.

Williamson contacted all the Garo chiefs and laskars who had submitted to the British authority earlier, and collected revenue from them. He enforced throughout the Hills a system of referring all inter-clan disputes to him for settlement, and gradually extended his administration into the interior. He used to visit a village or villages when inter-clan trouble had taken place and demanded a mutual settlement

of the dispute in his presence arrogating to himself the role of the ultimate dispenser and protector of peace and justice. He enforced acceptance of British supremacy by making them pay the revenue as fixed by him and by burning all the skulls kept as trophies in the villages and securing their agreement to submit all future disputes to the British appointed Laskar or to the district Officer. He used to enforce these by threatening to burn the defaulting village by his escorting police personnel. In the raids organised by the Government, the loyal Garos were always asked to contribute manpower against the rebel Garos in order that the use of police force might be the minimum.

Such threatening activities earned Williamson the allegiance of most of the villages of the independent interior. He traversed the Hills and helped in conducting surveys of the district by removing the last vestiges of the rebel Garos during 1872-1873, when a three sided expedition was conducted to ensure submission of the entire Hills.

When the Garo raids were on the increase along the foothills as well as in the plains, and inter-clan feuds also multiplied after a lull in the Hills, the Government introduced a system of rural police, called *Zimmadars*, in 1865 as the authority could not ensure surrender and punishment of offenders owing to the absence of any police machinery and also communication system in the inaccessible areas. The Laskars of the small contiguous villages were invited to select one of them or any other prominent man of the area as *Zimmadars*. They were given limited power of civil and criminal jurisdiction with annual stipends varying from Rs 25 to Rs 80. There were about 74 *mauzas*, the Laskar jurisdictions, with about the same number of *Zimmadars*. They were given old muskets and ammunition by Williamson, "to raise them in the estimation of their fellows—the great object to effect".

The system was, however, discontinued after several years when the practice of head-hunting and retaliatory feuds disappeared. The offices of Laskars and *Zimmadars* were then amalgamated to give the new incumbent the designation of Laskar only, a better and weightier position among the Garos, and to dispense with the duplication of Garo agencies introduced earlier by the British administration. A crude judicial system was also introduced under the first Deputy Commissioner (DC), Captain Williamson, in 1868. The actual police force of the district consisted of about 100 persons directly under his control, with no proper police duties to perform as the detection of crime, arrest of criminals, etc. were vested in *Zimmadars*. The police force protected the headquarters, escorted the district officer during his tour and occasionally was posted in the interior for short durations either to meet any specific situation, to force submission by Garo villages—mostly for the latter purpose.

But all these arrangements could not be fully effective in the southern part of the district, bordering on Mymensingh. This was a disputed area between the Susung Raja and the Government, with the Raja claiming a vast tract in Garo Hills (about 500 square miles). The Raja secured a verdict in his favour

The character and consequences of the British occupation and administration of Garo Hills are of topical interest. Garo Hills form an important part of the new State of Meghalaya scheduled to be inaugurated on April 2, 1970. The present article, based on a paper presented by Sri Kar, of the Tura Government College, Garo Hills, at a seminar on the "Tribal Situation in India", is the result of a survey conducted by him under the auspices of the Office of the Registrar General, Government of India.

British Occupation of Garo Hills

PARIMAL CHANIRA KAR

THE occupation of Garo Hills by the British is a story of a bloodless victory over a primitive and unsophisticated tribe. The achievement was financially cheap; but politically it proved to be extremely valuable and significant. It completed the subjugation of the present hill areas of Assam, and with this the whole of the eastern India came under British dominion.

The British accession to the Dewani of Bengal in 1765, extended their authority to the border of these hill areas which were then surrounded by the estates of different Bengalee zemindars who, for all practical purposes, were more or less semi-independent under the weak Mughal regime. The boundaries of these estates were ill-defined along the hills. These zemindars established, along the foot-hills, a string of *haats* (market places) where the Garos used to sell their produce and purchase their essentials on payment of tolls or taxes. But the exactions of various forms were carried to an extreme, specially in respect to the independent Garos of the interior. These were from time to time aggravated by the zemindars' frequent mercenary vails into the hills.

Matrilineal System of Society

The Garos were divided into two sections just before their contact with British authority. Many of the Garo chiefs, along with their people in the outer hills bordering the plains, were paying tributes or taxes to the zemindars; whereas those of the interior hills were free from any kind of outside influence or interference. But both the sections were free to pursue their own laws, customs and traditions in their respective areas.

The Garo society is matrilineal and consists of five exogamous groups or clans, each again being divided into many subclans, called *maharis*, related on the mother's side. Each mahari lives in a particular area of its own, called *Akhing*, under the authority of a *Nokma*, the husband of the inheriting daughter of the oldest family in the *Akhing*. He is

the custodian of *Akhing* or mahari land and acts as the village head as well as the spiritual head of the village. He is the person who settles all disputes in his area with the help of the leading heads of different families of the *Akhing*. Though independent of each other, the clans were often in a state of internecine feud. Retaliation for murder, adultery or insult to any member or members of a mahari was a clan responsibility, and it is interesting to note that in a good many cases the disputes were carried on from generation to generation till these were finally settled. Revenge always resulted in head-hunting which, in course of time, grew as a symbol of their chivalry. There was also the custom of burying with the dead body of any prominent man of the Garo society as many heads as could be procured for the purpose. The frequent raids by the Garos into the plains in pursuit of this tradition and also in retaliation of the endless exactions and oppressions by the zemindars and their *barkandazes* in the haats, disturbed the peace of the plains and the outer hills, and offered the British a favourable and alluring ground to turn their expansionist attention towards Garo Hills, or Garowana as it was then called.

In order to complete the subjugation of the Assam hills between the Brahmaputra Valley and the Bengal plains, and curb the zemindars' ever increasing power and influence in the border areas, as well as to suppress the head-hunting tradition of the Garos and set them against the zemindars, the British authorities passed Regulation X of 1822. The aim of this Regulation was to separate all the tributary villages and the independent interior of the hills from the clutches of the zemindars and bring them under the direct management of the Government, at the same time compensating the former for their claims and losses. The regulation also exempted the whole tract including the thana areas of Goalpara, Dhubri and Karaibari from the operation of the General Regulations.

David Scott, the architect of the British domination over the eastern frontier of India, was appointed

initial potentiality, the prevalent social system which will ensure them a comfortable living without working for it, adds as a factor against putting in the required amount of effort

Unfortunately the bug of careerism has not caught the majority of girls for whom a job is often only a stop-gap arrangement. The same is true of a majority of boys who take up MA English.

This, of course, like all generalisations, has only a kernel of truth. There must be serious students, too; but unfortunately it is this affluent section that has become the pace-setter in the University. The rest of the student community—the silent majority—has not reacted in opposing this more visible and articulate minority with healthier norms and values.

The Arts Faculty in the past was always a care-free place. There was little pretence at intellectualism by the majority, then as now, but one thing was there, it was a happy period. It no longer seems to be so. Perhaps the pressures have grown over the years, the fear of unemployed future is too portent, the fall of values too visible.

In any case it is undeniable, whatever the causes, that the young today are angry and frustrated, and this finds expression in needless acts of intransigence. Hence the frontal attack on the semester system not based on valid arguments but accusations like the one current that the English Department has been influenced by the Ford Foundation money and the semester system is being introduced at the behest of the Americans.

In fact, the attempt to equate mere anti-Americanism with being progressive, is a dangerous simplification, which is current in university circles today. This was the danger of not judging an issue on its own merits.

If foreign money can be used productively and with proper safeguards, it need not be rejected. But such accusations make it difficult for any Department to accept aid without becoming a convenient target for political attack, and future agitations.

Most of the teachers of the English Department feel that given time to settle down, it would prove a better system. The attendance in the classes was better this year and the students paid more attention to the lectures. Of course, one of the most serious and valid criticisms put forth by the students was the increased pressure on the books and library space. This should be urgently looked into.

Another good innovation introduced in this Department is that the teacher who teaches a certain paper at the Post-Graduate level, will both set and correct that specific paper. This a feature

borrowed from professional colleges and acts as a restraint on student indiscipline in the class.

The students' complain that the prescribed books are not easily available and that the Department has switched over to the semester system without adequate preparations need also to be remedied with proper care.

However, it is widely felt that if the students are tactfully handled and a sympathetic hearing is given to their problems, the semester system would go a long way in checking the growing erosion of academic standards, at least at the Post-Graduate level.

A CASE STUDY

Indian Universities: US-style Intrusion

C. N. CHARI

IT is perhaps not widely known how the American Cultural Centres (ACC) and the American Studies Research Centres (ASRC) play a subversive role in the field of university education.

These centres and foundations make tempting offers to bright students in the form of foreign scholarships. The centres have many other attractive schemes to draw undergraduate students to the centres. Regular film shows, quiz competitions, seminars and lectures, free lending of text books are some of the attractive schemes wellknown. In many places American Professors participate in the summer institutes conducted for school and college teachers. They have very ably penetrated all sensitive sectors of university education including student unions.

Seminars are very often conducted with the aid of the ASRC or the Ford Foundation on the issue of student-teacher relation-

ship. The staff advisers of the student unions who are invited to attend these seminars are advised, invariably by an American Professor, as to how they should manage student affairs. The attempt is made to impress upon the participants that the student-teacher relationship in American Universities is extremely cordial and that the guidelines set by the visiting American Professors should be adopted by the Indian Universities. The participants are loaded with dinner parties and are treated almost like VIPs.

But specific case studies have to be made to determine their methods of operation in our universities. One great factor which has been very helpful to them is the English language which is spoken in both the countries. In recent years many Universities have been offering American literature as one of the subjects of study at the graduate and the post-graduate levels. Several professors of

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Storm over Semester System

PROMILA CHADDHA

CURRENTLY the Delhi University is showing signs of dynamism. Proposals are there to introduce new changes in the curriculum, restructuring of old courses and starting of new ones with a vocational bias.

The changes in themselves are to be welcomed but their successful implementation will depend on patient cooperation of both the students and the teachers. At the moment this is one thing which is completely lacking in the Delhi University circles. The recent ugly episode of the gheraoing of the Vice-Chancellor testifies to a needless confrontation between the so-called establishment and the student community.

Examination System

However, a fact to be remembered is that the problems that bedevil the educational set-up are those that plague the Indian society as a whole, and no basic change in the educational system can take place in isolation from the general social and economic milieu of the country.

The Indian system of examination has always been a vulnerable target of attack, but attempts to change it have equally come up against the resistance of the students and a section of teachers also.

The plan to introduce the semester system was the subject of heated discussions in the University circles, and a decision to implement it was taken. The system would divide the academic year into two semesters—from July 15 to November 10 and from December 26 to April 10. The students are to appear in four papers at the end of each semester.

However, though it was widely believed to be a better system as it would keep the students on their toes all the time, several departments postponed the actual implementation. The Faculty of Law implemented the semester system, and here it is claimed to be working very smoothly.

The English Department, along with certain other departments, also introduced the semester system at the Post-Graduate level from this year, after, they claim, they had consulted both the teachers and the students of the then MA classes. Under it the Post-Graduate students would appear in sixteen papers spread over two years, that is, four papers each semester.

At the same time, "candidates for the Master's degree who fail to secure the minimum marks needed for securing the degree may be given a maximum of two additional chances for appearing in the examinations for the relevant courses. Those who wish to improve on their performance may be given only one additional chance. In either case, a candidate will have the option on each occasion to take the examination in all the courses covered by Part I or in all the courses covered by Part II or in Parts I and II taken together."

This gives the students ample choice in appearing in certain papers at the end of the First Semester and leaving others if they so desired, to be taken up at the end of the Second Semester.

However, the students reacted sharply against the implementation of the semester system in English, and an agitation to rescind this was spearheaded by the students from the St. Ste-

phen's College and the Miranda House, the strike was called and was more or less peaceful, but later on, being joined by outsiders, turned violent. Despite the agitation, the examinations were held at the end of the First Semester though many students boycotted them.

The students complain that the course is too extensive and five months are too short a period in which to get their bearings. The teachers of the English Department refute this. They hold that this contention would perhaps have been acceptable if the majority of the students had come from the Pass Course. But it is not so. The bulk of the students who join MA English have already done Honours in English in BA and, therefore, have already had adequate groundings of their subject.

Even under the old system, an average student from BA (Pass) could not expect to do very well. The courses have been extended and a student of MA English today covers much more ground than did his predecessor a few years ago. To that extent, the degree is of more value and perhaps more in keeping with standards elsewhere. For students who seek to take up academic careers this would be of great advantage. Also, now it is possible to specialise in certain papers.

Affluent Origin

But unfortunately this is an aspect that the students have by and large ignored. A number of teachers of the English Department feel that this is because there is only a small minority of students who join MA English, do so with the intent of doing serious study. Lack of seriousness is a disease that infects the majority who enter the Arts Faculty.

They hold that the majority of the students of MA English are girls who come from well-to-do homes. They come from public schools with a requisite high standard of English, and by and large they join the MA (English) for its "snob value". Even if gifted with

views of 1966 about politics and persons were quite different from those of 1936. Dr Lohia of 1966 was not the person he was in 1956. It is interesting to see an arch anti-Communist fighting for understanding with the Communists for ousting the Congress in 1966. What a metamorphosis! I know for certain that Dr Lohia went to Moscow through his own efforts with a view to come to an understanding with the leaders of Soviet Communist Party. Some close friends, particularly Madhu Limaye, can bear this out. Sometimes he described himself as an Indian Communist having no binding political string with Russia or China. During the Presidential Election of 1967, before Sri Subba Rao's name cropped up, someone proposed the name of Srimati Vijayalaxmi Pandit but was hesitant to suggest it to Dr Lohia who was against the Nehru family. But his forthright reply was that he was not against any member of the Nehru family if he or she was against the Congress. That was Dr Lohia. But today his name is being extensively used for petty interests.

The resolution passed at Sonepur was immediately put to test in Bihar where the SVD was formed of SSP, Syndicate, Swatantra and Jana Sangh. Raja of Ramgarh probably has also been approached for support. A strange alignment of forces for socialism! The SVD consisting of representatives of vested interests have been entrusted with task of ushering in socialism! What a miracle! Dr Lohia will wake in his grave and pray to God to save him from his followers. Dr Lohia had intense love for the backward classes and minorities. It is because of it that the SSP in its programme had given great weightage to this section of people. The Harijans, Advasis or Muslims or others of the backward classes must get in all walks of life proportionate accommodation. This was the focus of Dr Lohia's dynamics.

But what has been done in Bihar and UP? Jana Sangh,

a pronouncedly communal party, the Swatantra an anti-working-class party, the Organisation Congress which has till now represented vested interests would be the high priests for invoking socialism! Much ado has been made about some items of programme, namely, abolition of land revenue up to 6½ acres. Only on this test C. B. Gupta has overnight turned progressive if not socialist. Every interested person of UP knows why Sri Gupta conceded this item of programme. On November 25, the same Gupta refused this demand when Sri S. M. Joshi marched to the Secretariat with this demand. The period intervening between Gupta's refusal on November 25 and acceptance of the programme for abolition of land revenue on 6½ acres of land is significant. If the thick veil over the period is lifted the historian will obtain considerable material for discovering the deviation at Sonepur. If abolition of land revenue on land is the prime test of socialism, then the Orissa Government, by the same yardstick, can be termed socialist and should be given all support by the SSP. This item of the programme alone is not the panacea for the upliftment of the poor peasantry. It is a mere step towards a comprehensive scheme for democratic revolution. It must not be made into a fetish.

The entire analysis running through the whole Sonepur Resolution is that the Congress (O) is better than Congress (R). Had Indira Gandhi been the leader of the Congress (O) the sponsors of this Resolution would have stood against the Syndicate. No principle is involved in it. Personal prejudices must not pollute politics. For such a case all parties including the SSP are vulnerable.

A party is known by its programme, approach and alignment. SSP has got to trust the professions of other parties as other parties will trust the professions of the SSP. There is no point in imputing motives. The Congress (R) has got its own programme, approach and alignment. SSP has got to verify that the Syndicate Congress

is better than the Congress (R). Both these wings are twin brothers. Both swear by the Ten Point Programme and by democratic socialism. On this score the Congress (R) cannot be worse than the Congress (O). If they are on the same footing there is no sense in preferring the Nijalingappa Congress to the Jagjivan Ram Congress. In that context, support to C. B. Gupta and his party in Gujarat and Mysore as formulated in the Sonepur Resolution is not only wrong but a deliberate betrayal of revolutionary socialism.

Socialism has been buried at Sonepur. Pursuant to that policy the SVD was formed in Bihar with Sri Ramananda Tewari as leader. Practically the (SVD) consisting of the Syndicate, the Jana Sangh, Swatantra and the SSP was built up in indecent haste. What was possible at Sonepur could not be carried through at Patna because of the conscious rank and file. The lead to salvage the party from a morass of reaction has been provided by two popular leaders of SSP—Sri Karpuri Thakur Chairman of SSP, and Sri Ramananda Tewari, leader of the SSP Legislators Group in Bihar. They have dissociated themselves from the mortal embrace of reaction, with them stand the fighting elements of the Bihar SSP.

Sri Karpuri Thakur has argued in favour of the creation of a socialist block which would be the spearhead of a new Government in Bihar. Bihar and with her the rest of the country in general and fighting SSP elements in particular will be grateful to these two veteran leaders. The SSP has continued with the reactionary axis even after the Iyer Commission's verdict, exposing the Bihar Syndicate veterans.

A move in the right direction has started. The SSP members throughout the country should henceforward wage a ceaseless campaign for exposing the sinister move of a section of leadership which has buried socialism in Sonepur. Their fight is bound to save the party from its peril. Any delay in this regard would cause serious damage to the cause of socialism.

The debate over the Sonapur Resolution of the SSP is going on within that party as it continues to be the subject-matter of discussion outside. Observer's commentary on the SSP's Sonapur Conference (Mainstream January 17, 1970) was challenged by Sri Madhu Limaye which was published in the issue dated February 21, 1970, along with the Observer's reply.

Grave-diggers of Socialism

NAREN DAS

ON the last day of January 1965, the SSP emerged as a revolutionary Socialist Party. Before five years ran full circle, on January 10, 1970, the SSP Special Conference at Sonapur in Bihar buried socialism with pomp and grandeur. On January 10, the Special Conference of SSP adopted a Political Resolution that prescribed alliance with the Syndicate wing of the Congress and if necessary coalition Government with the same on the latter's acceptance of some not-so-socialistic programme.

The Sonapur Resolution that was passed underwent some amendments through pressure of the opposition. Otherwise, the original draft was worse still. This needs mention because that would provide one a peep into the mental workings of the sponsors of the new socialism.

The Resolution marks a sharp break with the declared policies of SSP in the past. Since its inception, the SSP was known as a militant anti-Congress force. The country in general looked up to it as the coming party of socialism. The massive movement launched for ousting the Congress on August 9, 1965 in Bihar and subsequent repression on Sri Karpoori Thakur and Sri Ramanand Tewari, is still fresh in people's mind. "Oust the

Congress and Save the Country" was the ringing slogan of the day. At Sonapur, the central slogan dangled was "Support the Syndicate and topple the Indicate Congress".

The central theme of the Resolution is, after the split in the Congress, the Organisation Congress popularly known as Syndicate led by S.K. Patil, Kamaraj, Nijalingappa and Atulya Ghosh and others have become progressive and as such can and should be SSP's ally in overthrowing the Congress at the Centre and in the States where the Nijalingappa Congress is now in power.

The main theme is, Congress (R) is the Congress and a villain to be toppled both at the Centre and States, with the support of groups however reactionary they might be. In other words, the Congress (R) is the greatest sinner and as such untouchable, whereas the Syndicate that was dominating the Congress platform for the last decade and were perpetrators of all the misdeeds, has been promoted to be a quasi-socialist if not a socialist force and as such would be SSP's faithful ally.

A query has been rightly raised whether the Congress (R) would be accepted as an ally if it accepted the time-bound test programme of the SSP. The reply from the sponsors was an emphatic "No". On the other hand, the Congress (O) is taken as the party which can implement the test programme of the SSP.

The Resolution did not stop at that. It declared that C.B. Gupta's Ministry had become quasi-socialist after it had made an announcement for abolition of land revenue upto 6½ acres of land. On its acceptance of some items of the programme, SSP can have a joint legislature party with Gupta's Congress party. Henceforward all attempts should be made to persuade Gujarat and Mysore Ministry run by C.B. Gupta's party to accept the test programme.

In the Resolution there is no competent analysis of the Congress split which in its opinion was brought about for personal gains. Any sensible man will be shocked to read such a glib statement from a political party. The Congress is a big party. Once it had a wide spread mass basis. Can any single person, however powerful he or she may be, split such a massive organisation for sordid personal aims? No political party's action can ever be read in such a perfunctory manner. To an average socialist there must be social reasons for the split in a party. One or few men can take advantage of that, but that too is not for an organisation like the Congress.

The Sonapur Resolution is full of contradictions. Both the groups of the split Congress have been tarred with the same brush. But, in practice, the Congress (O) has been preferred to the Congress (R). This is due to prejudice of Sri Rajnarain and others against the Prime Minister who has been painted as impervious to any social change, whereas S.K. Patil or K.B. Sahay are that liberal for accepting a quasi-socialist programme. This is mere obsession.

Some interested persons arrayed against the Congress (R) are carrying on a campaign that Dr Lohia was anti-Nehru. As self-styled inheritors of Dr Lohia these persons are anti-Indira, the inheritor of Nehru. It has now become inheritor's politics. The present writer had the privilege of knowing Dr Lohia since the thirties when today's claimants of Dr Lohia's mantle were not in politics. Dr Lohia was a colourful politician. His

The author is a well-known SSP leader in West Bengal.

a person has one house of a value of Rs One lakh in any urban area, he will not have to pay any tax. Besides, if one also invests a sum around Rs 50,000 in Unit Trust, or in shares of Indian companies and similar other lines, the returns from these will go tax-free. All this is in addition to the raising of the exemption limit to Rs 5 thousand of personal income.

In the last issue of *Mainstream* (February 28) Professor A K Biswas of the Delhi University strongly suggested the revival now of the Kaldor tax proposals. We should have thought that since the Wealth Tax has been widened in scope and the Gift Tax exemption limit has been lowered, this was also the right time to introduce Personal Expenditure Tax. We should not listen to the bureaucrat arguing that this is not feasible. For, the way in which this had been introduced in the Union Budget in the past was calculated to make the return from this Tax very low so that eventually the whole idea could be shelved.

Today it has to be introduced in the spirit of Kaldor, by which the Expenditure Tax is an integral part of the direct tax system together with income-tax, Gift Tax, Capital Gains and Wealth Tax, and with the purpose of raising the rate of savings, preventing conspicuous consumption and controlling the concentration of property. In the ultimate analysis these are the three criteria by which any effort for even mildly radical programme for development has to be judged.

The basis of Kaldor's proposals was that a rate of income-tax beyond 45 to 50 per cent, besides discouraging effort and investment, could not even be a good method of reducing inequalities in income, as it would surely be evaded. But, if at that level, an expenditure tax, with a high progression, is imposed, what will be arrested is the craze for consumption and luxury goods, which is the vulgar manifestation of the severe disparity in income distribution today.

The Gift Tax and the Capital Gains Tax will prevent its evasion and a proper scheme of Wealth

Tax will check the concentration of property and accumulation of wealth in undesired lines. There will be a rise in the rate of savings, and even if that is not reflected in the tax revenues, it would allow the Government to borrow or to go for deficit spending on a large scale.

Indeed, the crying need of this day is large Government investment. The proposed increase of Rs 400 crores in Plan expenditure is quite small, especially when there is going to be little increase in industrial investment. There is no other way to achieve social justice in our country without a high rate of growth. The lull that has set in our planning over the last few years has done enough damage, and a bold effort has to be made to reverse the process here and now.

Even private investment in our country has depended overwhelmingly on public investment. Leaving the corporate taxes untouched would hardly provide the stimulus that private investment needs, without the buoyancy of the economy that can be set only by large-scale public investment.

We are not talking today of socialism tomorrow. But let us face it that the private sector in this country can hardly stand on its own feet. It depends on the support of the public sector for the demand for its products, the supply of its inputs, the funds for its investments, and the host of concessions, subsidies and incentives. An expansion of the operation of the public sector is precisely what the private sector needs today.

BETTER THAN MORARJI'S

(Continued from page 10)

assets, but the absence of differentiation between urban centres will mean that the owner of a two-storeyed house at (say) Calicut getting from it a monthly rental of around Rs 300 will have to pay more tax than the owner of a 3-bedroom Bombay flat, getting Rs 1,500 per month as rental.

Welcome Feature The taxation of trusts and the new restrictions imposed on them are wholly welcome inasmuch as these trusts have often been used to evade taxation and to maintain control over family empires. The exemption of Rs 3,000 from the income from shares in Indian companies, Unit Trust of India, investments, etc., will strengthen the capital market and ought to encourage investment. It is, therefore, welcome.

One tariff which strikes me as being unreasonable is the enhanced duty on the import of drugs. While it is true that most varieties of major drugs are price controlled, and the income from this will not, therefore, accrue to any but the state, even while the consumer pays the same price, yet I feel that this is not the time to give the drug companies any excuse not to lower their prices.

This is not the place for a discussion on the malpractices of

the drug industry, but I hope Sri Shah will wake up and give us some *action* (instead of mere words) on the lines chalked out by Sri Triguna Sen. We expect this from him and very shortly.

The move to disallow altogether entertainment expenditure in the computing of profits and gains is a sensible one. As for specific cuts like those on hospital incomes (which are to be free of income-tax), several "hospitals" in India make good money fleecing their patients (a nursing home is a very profitable venture here) and the Government should have seen to it that the treatment charges fall *pari passu* with tax liabilities.

As for the various schemes announced, such an increased efforts to mop up rural savings, being a campaign of slum clearance, help small farmers and so on, I shall clap only *after* these have been *successfully implemented* and not before.

This, in brief compass, is the 1970-71 Budget. While there is no doubt that Smt. Indira Gandhi could have done much better than this, there is equally little doubt that she has done much better than her predecessor did. And this is a healthy sign.

Not a Bad Job

ALBERUNI

ON February 28 Smt Gandhi presented her first Budget to the Lok Sabha, and on balance one must admit that she has done a reasonably good job of it. One did not expect that at the present cross-roads of political uncertainty, Smt Gandhi would indulge in an exercise that might upset the precarious equilibrium of the political forces today.

Surely one did not expect a very radical Budget now. A hold-up operation, not giving any fresh ground to reaction or conservatism, should make one sufficiently pleased if one is also aware of the constraints of realism.

In the next few days, the forces opposed to the Prime Minister would try to use any possible plea they can obtain from the Budget proposals to create trouble for her if not actually to topple her Government. All other forces that see in the continuance of Smt Gandhi's Government the struggle that is on in our country for progress towards socialism should, therefore, be particularly careful and must try to understand the different aspects of the Budget which might be used by the Opposition.

One such aspect is the proposal for raising Excise Duties on some items. We have already heard some important leaders of the Opposition who call themselves Socialists, claiming that any rise in indirect taxes is regressive, that is, it hurts the poorer sections of the population more than the rich.

This is simply not true. If the

This contribution is from a well-known economist who prefers to remain anonymous

taxes are mostly on luxury commodities and in particular *ad valorem*, the people in the higher income brackets who have greater propensity to consume these commodities, will be much more affected than the poor. And it would be very difficult for one to maintain that the Excise Duties that have been raised in this Budget are not mostly on luxury commodities. The price of tea might go up a little, but then it is the finer quality tea that will be most affected. There is a good case for exporting this high-quality tea abroad almost as much as we can produce, and keep the people at home happy with the low-quality tea which in any case is what the common man consumes.

What about sugar? The price of levy sugar cannot go up much. It is the free-market sugar whose price would go up, but that is exactly what one should want. The free-market sugar has been showing a falling price of late. And this tax might just offset that much; but if it does anything more, it would not be very easy for the producer to shift the incidence of this tax to the consumer.

But there is a further point which should be noted. It is practically impossible to think of a rapidly growing economy without some restraints in consumption. All that is important is to make sure that those who are already almost below the subsistence level should not be hurt any more. And judging by this criterion, we cannot regard any of these indirect taxes contradicting the norms of social justice.

Some items whose prices may go up do enter the consumption

basket of the middle-income group. But their weight will increase as the level of income increases, and if the Government can raise some revenue at their expense to spend on growth-promoting activities, the economy undoubtedly would be better off.

Indeed the case of sugar brings out the justification of the dual-price policy which one should hold as an example to be emulated in other directions. There are several commodities for which the minimum requirements according to the needs of planned development can be calculated and can be acquired by the Government at a fixed price. The rest the producers may be free to sell in the open market. If they make some profit out of it that is good enough. But they would not be allowed to exploit the inelastic market for these commodities. One might suggest this dual-price policy to be extended to the field of some intermediate goods also, for example, steel, cement and coal.

It is in the field of direct taxes that one might think that the present Budget is over-cautious. The corporate sector has been left practically untouched; presumably because private investment has still not perked up even when industrial growth has become reasonably high.

A high marginal rate of taxes on personal income is seldom very effective. And if it were not connected with the proposal that the income slabs from Rs 40 thousand to Rs 2 lakhs would now be subject to higher rates of taxation, the marginal tax rates of over 90 per cent on incomes above Rs 2 lakhs could have been dismissed as a dishonest gesture. No one really believes that the taxes at that high rate can ever be realised—a 900 per cent profit on tax evasion is sufficient to frustrate all possible measures to plug the loopholes in the process of collection.

The rise in the Wealth Tax, especially bringing in the urban property within its scope, is a move in the right direction, and one hopes in the future Budgets this field will be more tightened. But one should not forget that if

(and, I regret to add, several of my otherwise knowledgeable fellow-economists) has fallen for the propaganda of the tea company lobby and have forgotten the fact that

(1) The supply of tea is inelastic over the short period, which in fact extends over at least seven years,

(2) With the Indo-Ceylon consortium becoming a reality, these two countries will, for the next few years, dominate the tea export trade;

(3) *In the absence of a lowering of the price of Indian tea in the world market to the final consumer, the entire loss of duty to the state will accrue as profit to the tea companies,* and

(4) While the demand for tea as a commodity is inelastic in world markets, the demand for tea from *any one producer* is significantly more elastic

Foolish Policy

Under the circumstances, the Government should have either (a) forced the tea companies to reduce the final prices of their teas in foreign markets as a *quid pro quo* for the abolition of duty, or (b) team up with Ceylon and suck up as much as is possible of the higher tea prices, for the state finances via *higher export duties*

This present policy is the most foolish one to adopt, the more so as it is the home consumer who is being made to foot a part of the bill for the Government's indiscretions via higher excise levies on tea sold domestically. This is a part of the Budget which, in the light of the Socialist

stance of my fellow-Congressmen, I simply cannot understand.

Jute, however, is a somewhat different case. Here we are facing competition both from East Pakistan as well as from other fibres, and as this is still a key export item, any effort to improve its competitive position is welcome. Here, too, care should be taken to see that the decrease in duty shows itself less in increased profits for the jute manufacturers than in the more competitive prices abroad.

There is another aspect to the question of excise levies these ought not to be allowed to become an excuse for *unjustified* increase in final (consumer) prices. R. R. Ruia's warning that the rise in excise rates on bleaching powder and caustic soda would lead to a rise in the final prices of processed cloth, is an example of this danger.

While the duty on caustic soda is being doubled, owing to the wide divergence that exists between the factory and market prices of the dyes and chemicals trade, *the increase in rates should logically have an effect only on the manufacturers and not at the consumer's level*. Care should be taken to see that this is indeed so.

Sugar prices too The increase in sugar excise levies from 23 per cent *ad valorem* to 37.5 per cent (in the case of free market and levy sugar, respectively), is also a regressive step and is understandable only on the assumption that the Government would prefer a slice of the profits of the sugar trade to a reduction in the final consumer price of sugar.

The supply of sugar has become

extremely variable in recent years, and if the manufacturers have to absorb a major part of the cost of the new levies (as seems probable), we may witness a fall in supply next year. Sugar being a good natural source of energy, this is undesirable.

And petrol The raising of the duty on motor spirit by 10 paise per litre shows the Government's desire to protect the Railways from their own incompetence, by raising the costs of substitutes, irrespective of the harmful effects which a rise in distribution costs will have over the entire economy.

I note that the Government does not seem to have paid much attention to the suggestion that taxes on automobiles should be graded according to the petrol consumption of the car concerned. I would have preferred a lowering of the exemption limit on cars to Rs 100 for those with cars having large petrol consumption, even while discriminative in favour of those with smaller cars via higher allowances.

This would have been far better than the present blanket reduction of allowances from Rs 250 to Rs 200 for motorcar owners.

Good Points of Budget There are some good points in the Budget, among which may be included (a) Fresh rates on urban property, (b) Changes in the taxation of trusts, and (c) Exemptions regarding shares and stocks.

The fresh rates on urban property will modify to an extent investment in these unproductive

(Continued on page 12)

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Better than Morarji's

M.D. NALAPAT

AFTER witnessing a series of bureaucracy-dominated Budgets doing positive harm to the economy, and presented during the regime of Sri Morarji Desai, it is a pleasure to welcome a Budget that is, at least, not *retarding* in its effects on economic growth.

True, the Budget does not make any very severe dent on income inequalities, the relief it gives to the poorer sections of society is purely marginal, and it does not do much to remove certain defects in the corporate rate structure. But it at least does not offer anything designed to *cripple* the economy further or expose the common man to much more severe burdens.

Main Features

This is so in general. But there are *particular* levies which are harmful, just as there are some which are beneficial. In what follows I shall set down and examine the main features of the Budget, treating as axiomatic the fact that a good government should (i) provide assistance and relief to the poorer sections of society over the well-off, and (ii) should seek to increase as rapidly as is compatible with that obligation, the *per capita* levels of production.

The main features of the Budget which should be of interest to the progressives are

(1) Relief given to the poorer sections of society *directly* via the Budget is insignificant.

(2) The existing structure of corporate taxation is to remain virtually unchanged.

(3) Efforts have been made to reduce unproductive expenditure

in several sectors.

(4) While some levies are sensible ones, quite a few are either inadequate or ought never to have been imposed.

Why Only Marginal Relief?

The move to raise the exemption limit to Rs 5000 is a forward step but it does not go far enough. Further, the absence of discrimination between family and non-family people is regressive and ignores totally all considerations of welfare. It is foolish to penalise children, for, the effects of this will extend far into the future. Simply because the Government has failed to provide adequate livelihood to many people is no reason why they should be made to suffer further for having been born at all.

I would have suggested a variable tax slab for family and non-family individuals *at the present rates*, the only difference being that for non-family people the exemption limit would be Rs 5000 and family people Rs 7,500. This is the only technique consistent with equity.

Further, raising the exemption limit from the Rs 4000 to Rs 4,800 range to Rs 5000 is hardly a major step. It would have been better to raise the exemption limit still further, as the real value of a man's income has declined to 40 per cent of its value in 1950, and this ought to have been fully reflected in the exemption limit.

There has been the usual discrimination between "earned" and "unearned" income (both these terms being so loosely defined as to cause considerable confusion regarding tax liabilities), but a much better differentiation would have been between *fixed* and *variable* incomes.

This is because those with fixed incomes are chiefly workers, Government servants, industrial employees, etc., while those in the variable income group are professional and business people primarily.

The importance of this distinction is that *while imposition of a tax on fixed incomes will not lead to any direct incentive to work more* (there being no way of earning more thereby), *those with variable incomes suffering diminution in welfare on account of the tax*, will feel an incentive to work harder to make up for this loss of income via increased effort which will bring in increased income.

It would, therefore, have been better to have higher effective tax rates on variable income groups as compared to fixed income groups, even while ensuring that the marginal rate of taxation is not so much higher than the average rate as to wipe out the incentive effects of increased taxation.

Heavy Reliance

Indirect Taxation still Preponderant. The heavy reliance on indirect taxation which has been rightly condemned by the Left, will continue into this financial year as well. Not merely this, but despite the fact that *no significant reduction has been proposed in respect of any major excise duty*, there have been several additions to the list which ought not to have been made.

The increased excise duty on loose as well as on packaged tea along with the abolition of export duty on that mass consumption commodity, is a good example of an unwise step. The Government

Specifically, there is a strong case for a tax on bonus shares and also reintroduction of the Expenditure Tax. Sri Morarji Desai's argument that the Expenditure Tax fetched paltry returns in terms of actual cash, has little relevance since the Expenditure Tax by itself acts as a deterrent against wasteful spending and encourages savings. The need for exemplary punishment for tax evasion has also not been emphasised in Smt Gandhi's Budget, although the time has come when there will be overwhelming public support if the Government demands extreme penalty for smuggling and tax-dodging.

While there has already started a furore over the new imposts on sugar and tea—against which the Government has put forward the plea that the prices of only free-market sugar and superior-quality tea will go up and not what are largely consumed by the poorer sections—the weakest part of the Budget has been with regard to tackling the menacing problem of unemployment. Apart from the platitude that the need for more employment is “not just a welfare measure” but “a necessary part of the strategy of development in a poor country”, there is little in the Budget to show the widening of the scope of employment.

The Left can also very justifiably demand to know what the Government has done to ensure to the common people the basic necessities of life at reasonable prices.

Even within the present administrative and economic framework it is possible for the Government to enforce two systems of market at home—the market of necessities and the market for luxuries. A quota of rough but cheap cloth, a standard system of basic medicines at a cheap rate and other items of daily necessity such as soap, can even now be enforced within the four corners of the mixed economy, while the scope for higher profit could be earmarked for goods of luxury or the same goods of basic necessity on a luxury standard. While the proposal for an Urban

Development Corporation is welcome, the urgency of tackling the problem of urban transport can hardly be ignored.

These are some of the points which could be tackled within the present economic framework without any revolutionary change. And in this respect the State Governments under Left leadership have to act as the pace-setter—a role which unfortunately neither Kerala nor West Bengal has so far played to the extent that their authority and responsibility demand.

THE politics behind Smt Gandhi's Budget thus points to her skilful handling of the complex forces that face her today. The widespread speculation about her Government facing a life-and-death confrontation during this crucial Budget session was not without foundation. Had the Syndicate, for instance, succeeded in consolidating itself in the strategic theatre that the UP and Bihar represent in the political battle-map of today, there is little doubt that the impact of such a development might have been of decisive consequence in New Delhi. The weapon with which the Syndicate has had to be fought, determined to a large measure the pattern of Smt Gandhi's commitments on the economic front. The offensive against Sri C.B. Gupta was launched at two different levels—at the mass level through the whirlwind tour through UP's countryside, with unprecedentedly large mass meetings thereby generating new expectations, and also at the level

of factional manoeuvrings by which Sri Charan Singh was won over even after his slipping into the Syndicate fold.

From all these it is obvious that the manner in which Smt Gandhi looks at the way-forward for her and her Government is not one of revolutionary changes but by streamlining the status quo, that the path ahead need not necessarily be hewn out of forbidding rocks but can work if a little broadened and macadamised. Nowhere is there any definite break with the time-honoured class-alignments, nor of a determined crusade against the depredations of Big Money; instead, certain curbs are sought to be put on the monopolies while certain concessions are to be made to the masses to keep them on the right side.

It is this very same outlook that has guided her in presenting the Budget. To talk of socialism about it is as irrelevant as to dismiss it as no better than Morarji's. In fact, one may say that she has tried to rectify the Morarji distortions of TTK's Budget strategy. No disturbing the status quo but no defiance of the wind of change either. As a first step, this has its undoubted significance. It is upto the Left forces—both inside and outside the Congress—to take it forward.

Viewed from this standpoint, Smt Gandhi's Budget (together with her new Industrial Policy) is by itself not a landmark of radicalism but it has thrown up possibilities for a radical break through.

N.C.

March 3

Coming issues of the Mainstream will carry special articles on the Budget and Indian economy. Contributions, on this topic are welcome.

to economic policy", she has assured: "At the same time, well-established industrial companies will be able to participate in the core sector and in industries with export orientation". There is therefore little validity in the extravagant claim of some of her supporters that the Budget is socialist-oriented.

At the same time, one cannot ignore the new emphasis in the Budget for a series of welfare measures. In this respect perhaps the most significant is the one which announces the setting up of a separate fund from Government contributions for family pensions for industrial workers. The proposal for an Urban Development Council along with a new emphasis on programmes of rural development, are no doubt useful steps to provide for certain degree of amelioration of the condition of the have-nots. The emphasis on encouragement to small enterprises and to new entrepreneurs is also noticeable.

All this together will no doubt help Smt Gandhi to neutralise any Left attack on the Budget. The need to keep up her popularity in the mass mind is very strongly reflected in such measures catalogued in the Budget, measures which are meant to bring down the growing social tensions in the countryside as well, and it is these which will demarcate her finally from the traditional Morarji type of budgeting to which the country was accustomed particularly in the last few years.

Another significant aspect of the Budget is the manner in which she has wisely tried to placate the State Governments. The increase in Plan assistance for the States as also the enhanced allocation to cover the gaps in the resources of some of the States are meant to neutralise to a certain measure the political opposition that might be generated in some of the non-Congress States against the Centre. This is in marked contrast to Sri Morarji Desai's homily to the States in the last year's Budget, which was very much resented by most State Governments.

Taking an overall view, one cannot help recalling how much

Smt Gandhi has moved in the last four years. Exactly four years to the month she, after assuming office, had gone to US and the entire economic perspective as laid down by the Asoka-Mehta-Subramaniam combine was for a clear political line-up with the West which reached its climax in the disgraceful devaluation of the rupee with disastrous consequences for the economy. The journey from 1966 to 1970 is not merely a case of changing sides in world alignments from Washington to Moscow—as some of her Swatantra critics have been continuously propagating—but a renewed effort at genuine self-reliance. This is reflected also in the Budget in which it is clearly stated that the receipts under PL 480 are expected to decline while the receipts under other types of foreign aid will certainly not go up despite the new emphasis for a stepped-up Plan programme—an emphasis which unfortunately has not found sufficiently strong advocacy from the Planning Commission itself; rather the Planning Commission under Sri Gadgil has created a sense of disappointment in so far as it has failed to act as the mentor for a more determined effort at building up a self-generating economy.



WITH all these steps for the renewal of national effort for building an economy of growth coupled with social justice, it is to be admitted that Smt Gandhi's Budget strategy is based on the continuation of the favourable natural conditions. The precarious base of the present economy can be measured from the single fact that one season of drought can upset all the calculations of the Finance Ministry.

As regards the tax proposals, one cannot help noting that they are based on the old concepts of taxation, while the political climate in the country as also the compulsions of the economy demand the taking up of new concepts of taxation.

Throughout the two decades since Independence, our taxation structure has confined itself largely to taxing the net profit and not

the capital employed. Inevitably, this gives an incentive to expenditure, with all the stepping up of perquisites and the many and varied methods of tax evasion. Instead of the incentive to save there is the incentive to spend. The result is that both in terms of tax returns and promotion of savings, the present concept of taxation has proved to be more a hindrance than a help. Instead of this, if there is even a low-level tax on capital employed or at least a tax on gross profit instead of the net, the returns will be much more, while the incentive for saving will be greater leading to wider scope for purposeful capital formation. Along with this, the Government could easily go in for fixing a limit on net profit beyond which there could be heavy taxation. This by itself does not lead to any revolutionary change toward socialism. In fact, many of the capitalist countries have the system of turn-over taxes which we in our country have not imposed.

A step in this direction was taken by Sri T.T. Krishnamachari when the Wealth Tax and the Expenditure Tax were introduced. Through the years the scheme of Wealth Tax has been modified in a direction which helps neither growth nor social justice. When it was first introduced, the expectations were that as years would pass, the Wealth Tax itself could be made into an instrument for curbing concentration as also social disparity. But nothing of the kind has so far taken place. The immediate need for further rationalisation of the Wealth Tax with the twin objective of growth as well as social justice has to be taken up much more emphatically than has been done in this year's Budget.

In this connection, it would have been useful if the Government had paid attention to the need for overhauling the existing evaluation machinery; at present the entire auditing is done by agents whom the vested interests can easily influence. It is necessary in this connection to go in for nationalisation of the audit, since the Government must create its own machinery of evaluation of wealth and expenditure.

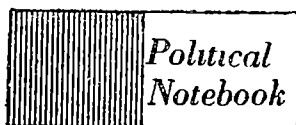
democratic discussion within the party which have alienated several prominent and dedicated members of the SSP in Uttar Pradesh; also, there is widespread resentment of his close ties with Sri C.B. Gupta and his associates, as well as with the Jana Sangh. The group in Bihar which is opposed to Sri Thakur and Sri Tiwari, significantly, gets its guidance from none other than Sri Raj Naram.

It is not only where power is within sight that sections in the SSP behave in this fashion. In Rajasthan also the same pattern is seen, in respect of the historic Ganganagar peasant agitation. In that area the Syndicate and the BKD have also participated in the kisan agitation with the aim of protecting and advancing the interests of the rich peasants, the CPI and the CPM have been leading the struggle of the small peasants and the landless. The SSP, strangely, stands in between. In fact, it is proving to be closer to the BKD and the Syndicate in this struggle than to the parties of the Left.

In Parliament, too, the cleavage in the party has made itself obvious. While the Limaye faction boycotted the President's Address, the group led by Sri Joshi did not, nor did it approve the Limaye stunt of filibustering the introduction of the Bank Nationalisation Bill. It is no secret that at least half of the SSP members of Parliament do not approve of toppling the Indira Gandhi Government for the sake of obliging the Syndicate. Like the CPI, the CPM and other Leftists, this group favours support or opposition to the Government on the merits of issues that come up before Parliament. It is also realistic enough to see that a viable Leftist alternative to the present Government at the Centre is nowhere in sight yet.

Thus, the time has clearly arrived for the rank and file of the SSP to take stock of the national reality and assess the results of the role played by some of its leaders, notably Sri Limaye and Sri Raj Naram. The party as a whole has to consider whether its aim is to secure a share in power anyhow, even at the cost of being an appendage of the triple axis of Syndicate, Swatantra and Jana Sangh, or to bring about unity and understanding among the parties which subscribe to the socialist ideal. Sri Tiwari has indicated the right answer by his recent call for a joint front of all the Leftist parties in Bihar, including the SSP, the PSP and the CPI, although he has chosen to leave out the Congress entirely presumably as a concession to the campaign of some of the leaders of his party.

Whatever may be the personal ambitions and calculations of some of the party's leaders, the SSP members have to remember that their party is on trial before the supreme court of the people. They have to make up their minds whether theirs will be a genuine party of socialism or merely a front organization for reaction. Once this is cleared, the party will know what to do with the leaders who have been systematically distorting its purpose and aims. If however the honest Socialists in the party are unable to change the party's political line as laid down by Sri Limaye and Sri Raj Naram, who are patently exploiting the natural inhibition of the party's ranks against any split in the party, then not only will they be convincing at the betrayal of socialism but will bring harm to the cause of the Left in this country. The moment of truth has come for all Socialists today: the SSP has to choose between authentic socialism and Syndicate socialism.



Politics of the Budget

THE political significance of Smt Indira Gandhi's much awaited Budget is to be assessed in terms of how much it reflects a new stage in her battle for survival against the challenge of the Right.

The slogan adumbrated right at the beginning of her Budget speech—Growth *plus* Distributive Justice—brings out in a sense the twin challenges that Smt Gandhi has to face today: the challenge of the entrenched vested interests, and the challenge of mass

awakening.

Growth in this context is not confined merely to the extension or strengthening of the public sector—although this aspect is being revived in the entire Plan projections despite strong resistance from vested interests along with a section of the bureaucracy—but to a large measure to the promotion of the private sector as a whole. It is significant that twice in her Budget speech Smt Gandhi assured the leaders of the private sector that “no-significant

change in corporate taxation is proposed”.

This aspect of the Budget has a definite political implication. For one thing, an important portion of Smt Gandhi's support comes today from those in Parliament and State level politics who are attached to Big Business houses; and she has no intention of making a present of them to her Syndicate adversaries. It is not without significance that while underlining the need for giving “a new sense of urgency

SSP: Moment of Truth

It is quite strange to find certain leaders of the Samyukta Socialist Party, which is going through its most acute internal conflict over fundamental issues of policy and attitude to other political parties, talking of a new initiative aimed at establishing a coalition of sorts at the Centre. It is indeed difficult to see Sri George Fernandes' kite-flying about a government of all parties other than the Congress at the Centre as anything more than a stunt meant to draw attention away from the developments within the SSP which appear to have made a split in its ranks inevitable.

The calculations on the basis of which Sri Fernandes exudes so much optimism regarding his coalition plan are certainly obscure: the idea is probably to emphasize that "anti-Congressism" of the Limaye-Raj Narain brand and the project for toppling the Indira Gandhi Government continue to be the sheet-anchor of what has come to be known as the Rightist faction in the SSP. Or, perhaps it is believed that the confusion that prevails within the party can be cleared by holding up the prospect of a share in power at the Centre. It is however doubtful if the section of the SSP leadership which has these aims can succeed in papering over the cracks in the party and preventing an internal confrontation on the basic question of the kind of alliances and arrangements the SSP should seek in furtherance of its declared political and economic objectives.

At Sonapur, the diametrically opposed approaches of the Madhu Limaye-Raj Narain groups, of which Sri Fernandes is a part, and the sections led by Sri S.M. Joshi and Sri Karpuri Thakur came into the open, and the compromise worked out after the bitter debates was patently a facade which took no one in. That the differences are irreconcilable became clear within a few days in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. In the former State the section of the SSP insisting on clear demarcation from the known parties of reaction, particularly the Syndicate, Jana Sangh and Ramgarh's Janata, proved much too strong for the one stridently demanding an alliance with these parties against the Congress. The SVD which Sri Raj Narain's friends in Bihar tortuously cooked up, collapsed before it got off to a start. It would have been easy, if the SSP had been united in Bihar, to set up a Leftist coalition and provide a stable and purposeful government—for which both the PSP and the CPI were prepared—but the rift prevented such a development. Also those SSP leaders who are firmly opposed to the Limaye-Raj Narain line of collusion with the reactionary parties are not yet bold enough to pursue the logic of their own

approach; evidently there are inhibitions still at work. In UP, the section which refuses to have any truck with parties like the Syndicate, Swatantra and Jana Sangh is not as strong as in Bihar, but it has nevertheless made itself felt. It has been able to expose Sri Raj Narain's game, and the demand for his expulsion from the party has come to the fore. In any case it has become clear that with Sri Raj Narain holding a key position in the party and with Sri Madhu Limaye apparently bent upon preventing the SSP identifying itself totally with the left movement in the country, there is no way of avoiding a split. It is a party which these "leaders" have reduced to such dire straits that Sri Fernandes imagines can provide the leadership for the formation of a coalition at the Centre.

Dominated by Sri Madhu Limaye and Sri Raj Narain, the SSP has travelled a long way from the days when, under Dr Rammanohar Lohia's leadership, with all its faults it was a dynamic, forward-looking party. In recent times its attitudes and postures have been marked by opportunism of a deplorable kind. And this has been nowhere more in evidence than in UP where Sri Raj Narain has conducted himself on the same lines as the rejected bosses of the Congress. It is his preference for stunts and strong-arm methods and his dislike of

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EDITOR · Nikhil Chakravartty

Views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and not necessarily of this journal

to Haryana? Is it Hindi-speaking on Punjabi-speaking? A recent meeting of about 25 Communists of the area, and well acquainted with the area, reviewed the position village by village, and came to the following conclusions about the position today.

(a) About 35 villages are clearly and predominantly Hindi-speaking. They have been contiguous with Rajasthan all along, but not with Haryana. They become contiguous with Haryana only if a corridor, consisting of one Punjabi-speaking village (Khundu Khera) of Muktsar Tehsil, is created and given to Haryana. And this is what is proposed to be done by the Government of India. This certainly is not a good precedent, to say the least.

(b) There are 15 or so more predominately Hindi-speaking villages but they are not contiguous either with Haryana or Rajasthan.

(c) The remaining 64 or so villages are Punjabi-speaking, all of them, except perhaps a few, predominantly Punjabi-speaking.

(d) Only a minority speaks Hindi as far as towns of Abohar and Fazilka are concerned. Majority in both the towns is Punjabi-speaking.

Unprincipled Decision

Even if one does not fully agree with these conclusions, there is no doubt that the entire area proposed to be given to Haryana is not Hindi-speaking and the decision of the Government of India regarding Fazilka is not entirely principled.

It is necessary to note the facts stated above, because even a very good case, sought to be based on wrong premises, becomes weak and fails to carry conviction.

To draw correct lessons for future from what preceded and followed the decisions of the Government of India, it is necessary to note a number of other facts and conclusions besides the above.

Except the Communists, all the all-India parties took diametrically opposite stands on the issue of Chandigarh in different

regions and mobilized people behind them—in Haryana with the slogan "Chandigarh for Haryana", in Punjab "Chandigarh for Punjab", etc.

Let it be clearly stated that the Jana Sangh and the Syndicate are not the only culprits. Indira Congress did exactly the same in the period before the Government of India announced its decisions. Even the SSP and the PSP could not resist the temptation of taking the same course for narrow and short-term party gains.

As things stand today, it is too much to hope that these all-India parties—bourgeois and petty-bourgeois—will take principled stand on questions of boundary disputes.

Mass Hysteria

Communists did not take diametrically opposite stands but stood on principles. They, however, are not a big force in Punjab, though they do matter. In Haryana, the CP(M) hardly exists, while the CPI is quite weak.

The CPI was able to hold its base and also succeeded in keeping the working class under its influence out of the frenzy, but it could not influence the situation as a whole, and a good deal of mass hysteria was let loose against it.

On questions connected with boundary disputes, emotions of large sections of the people can be roused easily, notwithstanding principles and justice.

Take the case of Haryana in relation to Chandigarh. If at the time of the reorganisation of composite Punjab, Chandigarh had been given to Punjab, there would not have been such a strong reaction in Haryana. But how emotions were subsequently worked up by politicians out to use the issue for power politics, and the high pitch of these emotions, became more than clear from what happened in Haryana after the decisions were announced.

An example of how even the working class parties can go wrong on these issues under outside pressure, is the position taken till recently by all parties

in the Punjab, including the CPI and the CPM, on the question of the Bhakra Dam. All the parties demanded that administrative control of Bhakra must belong to Punjab even though four States had been and still was vitally interested in it.

(The National Executive of the CPI in its recent meeting has given a lead to all the progressive forces in this respect by boldly coming out for joint control under the Government of India or any other mutually agreed arrangement.)

None will today dispute that the fact of delaying the decision regarding Chandigarh for three years by the Government of India did not help but only complicated it further.

The Indira Congress Government at the Centre was not in a position to take principled decisions all along the line in the atmosphere that had been created, even if it had the desire to do so. It could neither form its own viewpoint, nor afford to run the risk of bulk of its followers in Haryana and Western UP walking over to the Syndicate.

In Punjab reaction to loss of areas of Fazilka has been generally adverse. People have expressed their feeling by saying "Division of Chandigarh would have been better", "status quo would have been better", "Punjab has got a donkey in exchange for a buffalo", and so on.

Irresponsible Utterances

At the same time, it has to be noted that in the area proposed to be transferred to Haryana, a considerable section of Punjabi-speaking Hindus is happy. They are happy because they fear that Punjab might one day become Sikhistan. Irresponsible utterances of the Akali leaders in the month of January this year as well as the policy of the Akali-led Ministry of mixing religion with politics has strengthened this feeling among large sections of Punjabi Hindus living in areas contiguous with Haryana and Himachal.

This, incidentally, suits the Akali leadership—at least a section of it which also wants Hindu-majority areas to go out.

Due to communal as well as non-communal reasons, will of the people sometimes comes into conflict with the principle of spoken language. Take, for instance, Kangra. It is Punjabi-speaking but the people of Kangra do not wish to be in Punjab.

Besides these facts, another possibility has to be taken into consideration. There may be some villages on Punjab-Haryana border which before 1947 were not Punjabi-speaking due to migration of population. Perhaps 1931 census figures can tell the truth in this respect, because at that time there was no campaign amongst Hindus to deny Punjabi as their mother-tongue.

From the above, the following lessons need to be drawn for the future:

(a) When the forces willing to take a principled stand are weak in the areas concerned and cannot influence the course of events decisively, agitations and counter-agitations cannot lead to just and principled solutions especially in today's conditions. That, in fact, will only complicate the matters further. What is worse, it will set toilers against toilers and weaken our national unity too.

(b) The principles of spoken languages, village as unit, and contiguity, are the only correct and just principles. The matter, however, gets complicated when the will of the people of a particular area comes into conflict with that

If the complication is to be got rid of to make a just solution easy of achievement, progressive forces in Punjab must run a powerful campaign against all those acts and policies of the Akali Ministry which undermine secularism. Only to the extent they do this they will succeed in making Punjabi Hindus think of these problems not as Hindus but as Punjabis and Indians.

Finally we come to the concrete tasks of today.

Progressives must refrain from launching any agitation now to get injustices or alleged injustices undone. They must discourage other parties too from launching any such agitations. They should try to convince the

people that in the given circumstances of today more just and better solution are likely in a peaceful atmosphere.

Progressive forces must guard against falling a prey to parochial and chauvinistic feelings. The danger is there. Claims and counter-claims already being made by the Chief Ministers of Punjab and Haryana are an indication.

The Chief Minister of Punjab at first was expressing the hope that Punjab would get about 250 villages through the proposed Commission. Chief Minister of Haryana declared his intention to stake claim to 500 villages of Punjab. The Punjab Government has come out with an announcement of its hope to get 1,000 villages (from Haryana and Himachal).

Every possible effort must be made to ensure that the terms of reference of the proposed Commission are principled and that 1961 census figures are specifically ruled out.

As much of the dispute as possible should be settled through mutual bilateral talks, and what

cannot be settled in this manner may go to the Commission. In this respect, the offer made by the Chief Minister of Punjab and accepted by the Chief Minister of Haryana is to be welcomed.

As regards Punjab and Himachal are concerned there are special problems. According to some, a good part of Himachal is Punjabi-speaking. According to some others, the whole of it is Hindi-speaking. According to the Himachal Chief Minister, the mother-tongue of the people is Pahari. Again there are experts who would claim Pahari to be a dialect of Punjabi.

Taking all the existing circumstances into consideration, it would be best if the existing boundaries remain as they are and no claims and counter-claims are made.

Finally, coming to the question of Bhakra-Beas Dams complex and the Joginder Nagar Power House, progressive forces should adopt as their own the lead given by the CPI National Executive, and take their stand on that.

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Man of the Century

NORMAN FREED

NINETEEN-seventy marks the centenary of the birth of VI Lenin. All over the world, on all continents, working people associate Lenin's name and his immense contribution to human knowledge and action, with their struggles for social emancipation. In these stormy times Marxism-Leninism has become the most influential ideology, the revolutionary guide for social change.

It has been pointed out on previous occasions that the bourgeois, Right-wing social democratic and revisionist ideologists of all shades will find it difficult, if not impossible, to ignore the Lenin centenary and the contribution made by this great man of our time.

We also anticipated that they would strive to belittle, emasculate and distort the scientific substance, the international character and significance of Lenin and Leninism.

The article which appeared in the January 6, 1970 issue of the *Globe and Mail*, under the heading "How history has made Lenin a tragic figure" by Milovan Djilas, reprinted from *The Times* of London, bears out our preconception.*

It is, of course, understandable why the bourgeoisie finds it beneficial and useful to use revisionists, in this case a Yugoslav

revisionist, for its attacks on and distortion of scientific socialism. The only references Milovan Djilas was unable to distort were the date and place of Lenin's birth and similar historical facts. All other treatment represents a complete distortion of both the substance and the significance of Lenin's contribution to mankind.

The assessment and critique of Lenin by this revisionist apostle is not very subtle, in fact, it is very crude. His main theme—"that history has made Lenin a tragic figure"—is so contrary to experience, to the facts of history, to the record of achievements, to the influence of scientific socialism and to reason that from the word go it puts him squarely in the anti-Communist camp.

Scientific Approach

All the rest of the drivel and hodge-podge of innuendos seek to "prove" his main theme. He fails, of course, because his numerous assertions are false, without any foundations in history or experience.

This turncoat makes the charge that Lenin has been transformed into an "infallible sage and saint" and was "a fervent and implacable dogmatist." Truth, of course, means nothing to the jugglers of distortion.

Lenin, as is well known, was the greatest enemy of mysticism and of any belief in blind faith. He was above everything else a man of science, more, he made a singular contribution to the complex problem of the unity of word and deed.

In philosophic terms he made an immense contribution to the

concept of the unity of theory and practice. He viewed theory as the generalization of practice and practice as the test and source for the further development of theory.

All his active life he fought against dogmatism, both in theory and practice, as being contrary to science and thus detrimental to the cause of social emancipation.

Djilas, after grudgingly acknowledging that Lenin had written a revolutionary critique of Russian society, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, and elaborated the doctrine of the revolutionary party of a new type, has the temerity of accusing Lenin of building a "professional party of bureaucrats" and charges "here too were planted the seeds of dissensions in the world as we know it today".

He is apparently opposed to the working class organizing its own party, but if it must have a party, it should be of a liberal or Labour Party type, where everybody can do their own thing. It could do everything except challenge the rule of monopoly and lead the working class and its allies to assume political state power and begin the building of a socialist society.

A party which is dedicated to and is guided by the science of Marxism-Leninism is characterized by this revisionist apostle as a "professional party of bureaucrats". All we can say is that this renegade is serving his masters very well indeed.

We find it very difficult to follow the charge that Lenin had "planted the seeds of dissensions in the world as we know it today". What does this mean? We had thought that the dissensions in our time are the response of the people to the evils of state-monopoly capitalism, the consequences of exploitation, wars, oppression, poverty and cultural genocide, in toto representing a striving for fundamental change.

Perhaps this turncoat is resurrecting the old refrain that revolution brings forth counter-revolution. We must frankly admit that Leninists will never give up their revolutionary perspective.

The author is a well-known Canadian intellectual and journalist.

*The article published in *The Times*, London, was reproduced in several newspapers all over the world. *The Statesman*, Delhi edition, published it in two instalments on December 15 and 16, 1969, under the headings "Lenin: Neither Consuming Love Nor Hatred for Any Person—I" and "Lenin: By No Means the Founder of Leninism-II".

History and experience has proved beyond doubt that social progress cannot be achieved without revolutionary change. Whether the revolutionary change will be peaceful or non-peaceful depends on the relative strength of the contending class forces at the given time and place.

One thing is certain, no ruling class will ever give up its power voluntarily. The working class must be prepared to defend its political gains.

Ridiculous Charge

Perhaps this renegade is alluding to the differences within the world Communist movement and is blaming Lenin for their emergence. This charge is, of course, ridiculous. The differences reflect the various social, economic and cultural levels of development, the petty-bourgeois influences emanating from the large peasant populations and the pernicious pressures of nationalism.

Marxism-Leninism is not the source of the differences, as claimed by this revisionist; it is the only solid basis for their solution.

This brings us to another wild claim made by Djilas. He writes that "according to both Marx and Lenin the state was supposed to begin withering away, overnight as it were, after its inception". Only a charlatan could attribute such a concept to Marx and Lenin.

They viewed the withering away of the state as a process. They underscored the fact that the state came onto the scene of history with the emergence of classes and would wither away when the conditions which gave rise to the state will have been eliminated, when a society without classes and without the memory of classes in the minds of men will have been created.

This philistine talk about the state withering away overnight is not only infantile, it is malicious. Just imagine the working class taking political power, as in Russia, and the next day doing away with the state, and then facing a civil war, foreign intervention and the mighty historic task of building the

material foundation for socialism. Without a strong working-class state there would be no Soviet Union today.

That, of course, is not of great moment to this apostle of abstract dogma. It seems that all the pretence and sermonizing about science is thrown out of the window. This is typical of all revisionists.

How crude and vindictive can one become! There seems to be no limit once one gets on the revisionist path. Djilas claims that Lenin's theory of capitalist imperialism was not original, that J.A. Hobson, the British reformer, was the first to develop it.

Space does not permit a full treatment of this most important contribution by Lenin.

He defined imperialism as the highest stage of the development of capitalism. He proved with scientific precision that imperialism is the last stage, the last rung in the development of capitalism from laissez-faire, free competition to monopoly, economic intervention of the state, state-monopoly capitalism.

He proved that imperialism is an objective, inevitable process in the evolution of capitalism. In its imperialist stage capitalism retards and obstructs social advance and has to be replaced by the next higher stage of human development—socialism.

This constitutes an original development of Marxism in our time. Are these the conclusions that were made by J.A. Hobson? Of course not. This is not to deny the contribution made by Hobson. Developments since have fully substantiated the basic contribution made by Lenin. His foresight was remarkable because it was scientific.

The final comment we wish to make is about the claim that during the life of Lenin nobody talked about Leninism. What does that prove? Nobody talked about Marxism during the life of Marx either. What is involved is an assessment of the contribution made by Lenin to human thought and action.

If Lenin's contribution was "constricted and schematic," if "the scientific theoretical appro-

ach has hardly any place in Lenin's thinking unless action is involved", if "his mode of thought was not a philosophical one, nor were his methods scientific", then Djilas and his ilk are right.

History and experience has refuted these and other allegations. Lenin was an eminent man of creative thought and action who developed the science of Marx and Engels in the realm of philosophy, natural sciences, political economy, the strategy and tactics of the socialist revolution, the founding of a revolutionary party of a new type, and the building of socialist and communist society.

The most outstanding revolutionary developments of this century are associated with the role and influence of Lenin. The great October Socialist Revolution, the birth of the first socialist country in human history, the world socialist system, the national and social liberation movements, the advances gained by the working class and democratic forces in the highly developed capitalist countries, the concept of peaceful co-existence. These are some of the reasons why history has made Lenin the most outstanding man of our century.

Real Purpose

In typical revisionist fashion, Lenin's contributions are reduced by Djilas to mere pragmatism. Lenin is accused of having revised Marx. Communists are accused of having abandoned both Marxism and Leninism.

It is difficult to understand how one reconciles the claim that there is no Leninism. How anyone can abandon something that is not there is beyond reason. But reason is apparently of no consequence to these gentry.

We should not, however, misunderstand the real purpose for these circus-like juggling acts. The real purpose is to create confusion, diversion with the aim of weakening the influence of scientific socialism in this epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism.

Gentlemen, it won't work!

(*Canadian Tribune*, January 14, 1970)

On March 8 falls the International Women's Day
This article reproduced from The Hungarian Quarterly
(Vol X No 34) is by a distinguished writer

Women's Life is One Long War

EMIL KOLOZSVARI GRANDPIERRE

WOMEN, women, women, everywhere women. Everywhere in evidence, everywhere a part to play. The external look of society has changed as well, because whereas before it was androgynous in character, now it is—can we say—bisexual? Our achievements include the work of women as much as our failures include their faults.

New problems, new kinds of conflicts indicate that the position of contemporary woman is different in very many ways from what it was. One of the characteristics of the "b.sexual" society of today is that, with the exception of motherhood, most problems and conflicts are common to both sexes rather than specifically feminine. The women interviewed or illustrated in my survey for the most part belong to the professional world, but the conclusions *mutatis mutandis* equally apply to working-class women and women working in the country as well. The differences, if any, are of detail. If many of the problems and conflicts—careers, motherhood and so forth—confronting women in Hungary are the same as in the West, there is nevertheless one radical difference. In Hungary, by and large, every woman enjoys the same privileges and faces the same difficulties, whether she is a worker, a peasant or an intellectual, whether she lives in town or in the country.

For the facts in my account I am indebted to official statistics, except for my statements on opportunities for making acquaintances. The latter derive from my own statistical field-work.

For my purpose it is perhaps best to begin with the visual symptoms. In the old days the majority of the audience in public places—theatre, concert hall, cinema—consisted of women in their thirties. Today female audiences are mostly made up of young women and elderly ladies.

I asked a woman engineer some thirty years old or so what she thought of it.

"You mustn't think that we are less interested in music, the theatre or literature than the older age groups or those full-blooded girls whom one of our writers has called 'democratic panthers' because they are muscular, resilient, dangerous,—the children of

democracy. The real point is that the decisive period in the life of contemporary women is those ten odd years which begin when they take their first job and end when they have reached their goal."

"What goal?"

"Don't let's complicate the issue with a list of the different goals. Let's stick to women of my sort, those who have chosen some kind of profession for themselves—engineering, the law, economy, medicine, meteorology, and so on. These are the ten years in which we lay the foundations of our career. There are of course exceptions, but generally speaking this period is long enough to decide who gets on and who gets stuck. Once our position is settled for better or worse we have more time to amuse or educate ourselves, or follow our hobbies."

This was a professional woman speaking. But I heard similar words from another, though she had chosen to have children and work as well. Once her children were older, she said, and the bigger ones could keep an eye on the younger ones, she hoped to have more free time to go out.

There is a third goal to complicate the situation. With the exception of a very few lucky ones, the best years of young women are consumed by the struggle for a flat, which is the *sine qua non* not only for married life, but frequently for further training to pursue their profession satisfactorily. The luckier ones apart, who start life with advantages over the majority, our young people play the same part in the same drama as young people everywhere, in a play that could be called "Flat of a Salesman".

"Because in the twentieth century," a young married woman burst out, "it is no longer money that drives society, as Balzac said, but flats. Those who have it have everything and immediately become good-looking, pleasant and desirable. If a woman has a flat she'll get one proposal of marriage after another, and if the owner happens to be a man held better be prepared to run like a hare any moment of the day, because one unguarded moment, and there he is, co-habiting with some determined female. A flat is the main sex appeal, it is the

source of love and hatred, even of passion. Oh you three rooms with a hall, you!"

Another striking thing, Hungarian women are in rebellion against fashion. To be fair, it must be remembered that the discipline in matters of fashion in the interwar years was exactly like Prussian military drill—wherever one looked one saw complete uniformity in hats, patterns and colours.

Today there is a file-past of twenty years of fashion on any big occasion. Because contemporary Hungarian women snap their fingers at the dictates of fashion and wear whatever suits their taste. Today it is not women who serve fashion, but fashion which serves women. Formerly a Budapest lady was a servant of fashion, today she is its queen.

My friends from abroad have called my attention to one form of this revolt. In the West women shave their armpits, they never go out without a girdle or brassiere, because anyone who did would be offending against "good taste." With us only a negligible minority have adopted these particular western customs; the majority simply disregard them. This revolt, I understand, represents a considerable tourist attraction. The other day my way led past the Medical University just as a bunch of girls were streaming into the street, half of them in pullovers, half in blouses, and as they went past gaily, their every movement bore witness to the fact that they wore neither girdles nor bras. The sight would be well worth a transatlantic flight, and I understand there really are some who take it.

"Intensified mating struggle"

Emancipation also shows its effects in the field of sex. "There is an over-production in women," one young woman put it, since nowadays many more people are engaged in the commerce of love than in former days, when the practitioners of free love enjoyed a certain monopoly. As a direct consequence of the surplus in women the mating struggle has intensified. Since there are more women than men, women have to fight to get a partner and fight longer to keep him. And if the partner has a flat, then the laws of the jungle take over.

There are some who throw themselves happily into the unlimited sexual freedom of today, which incidentally is not really anything new. Others have more mixed reactions. A twenty-eight-year-old girl said:

"I successfully combine in myself the masculine sexual ethics of the women of today with the exaggerated femininity of women of yesterday. Nobody knows what to do with me, and I don't know myself."

In reaction to too much freedom quite a number seek refuge in chastity. The roots of Hungarian Puritanism go at least as deep as those of English Puritanism, and both reach back to Calvin. The girls who insist on chastity usually choose young men of a similar persuasion for husbands. The mating of these two inexperienced persons is the same old story which has bored us to extinction in literature. Occasionally some individual experience breaks the pattern.

"I was sick of the 'flesh market'," said a woman I know, "the uninhibited making and unmaking of relationship, I was sick and tired of the promiscuity around me. Men fancied me all right, but something or other always put me off, it was either the person who made the advances himself, or the way he went about it. And meanwhile time went by, and I became quite well-known in my chosen career, I became a sort of public personality. So new inhibitions have been added to the old. If I happened to choose a man with an indiscreet tongue—and with us that's pretty certain—I'd become an object of public ridicule. Just fancy if it ever got out that a good-looking woman was in her thirties when she lost her virginity! The whole country would lick their lips over this delectable piece of indiscretion."

A few trips abroad solved the problem.

Changes in linguistic usage also bear witness to sexual emancipation. I heard a girl say about a popular actor "Oh, yes, I could have had him several times, but I didn't want him."

Under the laws of the Hungarian language, which are governed by old-fashioned rules of ethics, it is the male who possesses the female. Young women nowadays use another, more radical verb in the same active sense as once used exclusively by men.

"If I want to eff a man, I do."

The binding and loosening of sexual ties, whether legal or—to use a *demode* expression—illegal, have become easier. There are many reasons, but the chief?—well, perhaps that the medical committee deciding on abortion applications are very liberal in their attitude. The consequence appears to be that the birth-rate in Hungary is the lowest in the world. But due to improved measures of child welfare the birth-rate has been going up again in recent years.

What with traditional methods of contraception and the kindly services of the abortion committees, most sexual inhibitions have disappeared. Linked with this, I suppose, is the fact that many more people marry early and the number of marriages is increasing, with many of the young living together during their undergraduate years. There is also the related fact that divorces are very frequent, since the authorities place no obstacles in the way.

Marriage and Divorce

Marriage, divorce, abortion—in these matters of vital importance the parents have practically no say. Parental authority in the old sense hardly exists and the youngsters in most cases face their fathers and mothers with a *fait accompli*, not because they do not respect or love them, but chiefly because the standards are different. Under these circumstances, of all possible consequences the girls have only disease to dread, less than before, and solitude, the same as before. There are a great number of young divorced women, and women who have divorced two or three times before they are thirty are not at all infrequent. In this respect we seem to be catching up with the United States.

What acts as a brake and has a vulgarizing effect on the development of relations between the sexes are the few opportunities that exist for young people

to meet. At the time of the personality cult balls and five o'clock teas were abolished, and social life came to a standstill, as in those days almost any gathering was regarded as the focus for an anti-state conspiracy. The old forms of social life were replaced by factory get-togethers and parties, to which only the workers and their families could be invited. As a consequence a certain sort of inbreeding developed in both legal and extra-legal relationships. Although the Government has done much since the sixties to normalize the situation, no real change in this respect has yet occurred. The time has been too short. Opportunities to make new acquaintances are still rather limited: the place of work, school, sport and of course the street, which does not suit everybody. Holidays at trade union holiday homes marginally widen the opportunities to meet people at the place of work, while at the home *hazibuli*—the “proper do” among the youngsters, those who meet are already school friends.

Naturally both sexes suffer from the limited opportunities available, men, for biological reasons less, women being the main victims, especially the more fastidious of them, who think it matters whom they marry or who fathers their children, or who their partners are.

The following advertisement was inserted in the papers by one of my acquaintances:

“Engineer, 50, not interested in going out much, seeks for the purpose of marriage the acquaintance of a technically-minded woman able to help him in work.”

Frankly, the ad is not particularly attractive, and yet over two hundred replies were received. The youngest of the volunteers was 17, the oldest 60. Telling evidence for the solitude and frustration of women.

Office affairs have given rise to one of the parasites of our society, the attractive young woman who does no work, has no experience in any line or any ambition to learn more, and whom one of her bosses rewards with bonuses for services rendered quite unconnected with her job. I knew a girl of this description, very good-looking, who would lounge, undulating her breasts and buttocks, among her occupied colleagues, busy with a rush of work, and when somebody dropped a remark that she did nothing but loaf all day she retorted with dignity:

“I can do whatever I like in this enterprise.”

Equality of Rights?

Thanks to the kind consideration of her boss, she could. Until at short notice the boss was transferred to the provinces.

Since 1948 women have the same rights as men by law. But go to a swimming pool and you will soon be convinced that there is something fishy in this matter of equality. For despite the fact that a large number of young men let their hair grow to the shoulders and a large number of girls crop their hair close to the head, the wearing of rubber caps or scarfs in the swimming pool continues to be compulsory *only* for women. And other departments of life tell a similar story. The earnings of women for

instance. This time let me illustrate my remarks by quotations from the *Statistical Review* (“Diploma and Earnings” by Laszlo Lengyel and Arpad Olajos, May 1967). “The rough differential averages as between men and women workers decrease if the disparities arising out of the varying composition of the sexes and the manpower structures variable between trades and jobs are discounted by standardization. Women of the same age, professional training and sphere of work, however, earn on an average about 20 per cent less, in the case of the highest qualification, and in the case of middle school certificates, 26 per cent less than men. These differences naturally do not mean that women get less wages for equal work than men.”

Even though this description of the situation does not commend itself to the reader for its clarity, there can be no question of its scientific accuracy.

As in all other European countries, more and more women in Hungary are taking jobs. The higher their academic qualifications, the more. According to sociologists, female labour is needed since the full labour possibilities of the male population are exhausted. In Budapest about 40 per cent of the women are gainfully employed and the ratio is very much the same in the country. In absolute figures this means more than two million women in employment.

Successes and Frustrations

The fact that almost half of the women in the total population are independent earners has given rise to a series of conflicts, some old, some new. This is not the place to go through them all, but a few must be mentioned. Since working usually requires some previous training, in school or educational courses, part of the conflicts begin with studying. A common conflict is child versus further training, another is doing a double job—for the young couple are saving up for a flat—or training, and frequently, domestic peace or training.

Incidentally we have to make a distinction between the types of those going in for higher education. Some of them go on studying because they feel a calling to a certain career. That's all right, but the opportunity to study and the sense of vocation do not always meet, which is a source of further conflict. By way of illustration of this not exclusively women's problem let me quote here a dialogue I overheard in a swimming pool. Two girls are talking.

“Where did you apply for admission?”

“The Agrarian University.”

“How can anyone be so silly as to apply to the Agrarian University?”

“You're silly. What does it matter where you're rejected from?”

This dialogue catches the mood of the problem which is following the latest technological revolution. The various occupations and careers are being restructured, one needing more manpower, the other less. In the United States not only automation but cybernetic developments are displacing increasingly large masses of people from their

occupations and forcing them, in the best cases, into re-training within their own trade or profession, in less favourable ones into a different occupation altogether, and in the worst, into unemployment. We are still at the beginning of this process, but the effects of the technological revolution are already making themselves felt in the selection of a career.

Some of the candidates for the university are rejected in this or that field not because they are women, but because in certain professions there is already overcrowding. Formerly women in Hungary who wanted a career chose teaching first, with medicine and the arts coming next. In those days most women looked to marriage for their career. For those who could not succeed in any other way there was prostitution, a field of unlimited scope for female failures. As an all-time occupation prostitution has disappeared, its place being taken by semi-prostitution and voluntary social work in the sexual field.

Today all professions are open to women, including all those in the technical fields, agriculture, scientific research, politics and the civil service. In the old Hungary women could at best be guest performers in these departments. The statistics show that the present division of labour between men and women is based on sensible grounds, not as in the days of the personality cult, when, in the first flush of sexual equality, women were recruited for jobs like mining and tractors driving, for which they are biologically unsuited. Today women have taken over half of light industry, transport, trade, teaching, pharmacy and the new tendency is for the law, they fill 34 per cent of the posts in the civil service. A few figures in 1960: half of the dispensing chemists, artists, educationalists and 20 per cent of the doctors and economists were women, and a good many were employed in agriculture. Here their situation is particularly difficult, since the new intelligentsia which is taking over from the old in the provinces do not accept the male agronomists into their social life, let alone the women.

There are, therefore, the lucky ones who can study what they feel is their vocation. Some of the less fortunate whose cultural tastes would naturally lead them to the humanities at the University are forced to compromise with circumstances and choose training which does not correspond with their sense of vocation. This compromise will become doubly irksome if the woman who has thus missed her vocation is forced to accept a further compromise in the choice of a husband because of the limited opportunities of finding a suitable partner.

"Just put yourself in my position," said one of these doubly frustrated women. "I want to have children, because since I didn't marry for love and I don't work for love, I could at least find some meaning in life in motherhood. But no, my husband wants a car first. So how does one bear it all?"

Most numerous are the women who go on to higher education for economic reasons, and are not fired by any particular ambition. They do it to supplement their husband's salary, because they want children or a car or both at once. Others feel

impelled to study out of pride or the desire to be independent. They want to stand on their own feet and they choose the career which seems the most appropriate for reaching their ends. There are heroic types among them.

"It wasn't easy to get used to work. I had lived as a queen till I was forty, then my husband died suddenly and I had to support my helpless old parents. Three of us on one salary! Do you know what that means? It needs a financial genius to do it—and a lot of overtime!"

The education of women has been expanding by leaps and bounds over the past two decades. It is not entirely to the good of women or society, because, to take one point alone, the only knowledge that is socially valuable is that which does not remain private and personal, but is transformed—in however complicated a way—into a communal asset.

A typical patch of colour in the fresco of our society is composed of the admirable mass of art for arts' sake students. Some of them are impelled by the myth of matriculation. We have all known for some time that matriculation in its present form is not worth very much. It provides no special qualification for those who take it, it does not prepare them for any of the higher studies and it is extremely doubtful whether those who matriculate can claim to have acquired what is called a general culture. Yet despite this hundreds of people matriculate from the evening courses of the secondary schools—hairdressers, waiters, confectioners and so on—who all have their own trade and can expect no advantages or promotion from this final examination.

"Why not learn a foreign language instead?" I asked a hairdresser. "With the same amount of effort you could learn two languages."

"Really?" she said. "I hadn't thought of it. Anybody I talk to has just taken matric or is about to. But as I've started now I won't stop, though."

She pondered a little and then said that the year before she had gone to Vienna, and that everything had been very nice and pleasant, but she couldn't speak a word of German, and that took some of the gilt off the gingerbread.

Those women who go in for study without any aim in life or any plan also fall into this category. They escape to study to put some meaning into their lives. Frustrated grandmothers clean day and night, their frustrated grandchildren learn. Among the art for art's sake students are married and unmarried women in equal numbers, and the family conflicts over study vary accordingly.

Little wonder that the husband loses his temper when he comes home to find, not a life companion, but a pupil in a funk over some examination or other, and no good for anything. His temper is all the more justified in proportion to the aimlessness and hopelessness of her studies.

"Hell, is this why I've married you!"

It is a marginal conflict, no doubt. On the other hand, the conflict between motherhood and career has vital consequences for social existence, because whichever the woman finally chooses, society is the worse for it. It either loses an excellent scientist,

or one or more excellent children, since experience shows that there are scientist dynasties. In this or that field, therefore, counter-selection comes into operation

The conflict itself is a necessary and unavoidable concomitant of the rapid progress of the sciences. An inquiry held recently in France came to the conclusion that the conflict starts with the second child. This conclusion probably squares with the facts. But certainly not for long. Those working in the service industries like hairdressers, catering workers and also teachers, typists, and so forth can bear more children. In medicine or engineering a doctor or an engineer on routine work is not necessarily affected by the lag caused by maternity leave. On the other hand there are certain occupations which call for complete absorption and devotion, because anyone falling behind the latest developments in such a profession will never catch up again. There was a scientist who calculated that six years would be needed to read all the literature on penicillin. True, the example is like the enormous hat that used to hang outside hat shops in the old days. It does not fit any normal person, only a Gargantua could clap it on his head. But then it is no common thing even to keep count of authors whose books are worth reading on the subject of penicillin. It also takes time to read and make notes on them. And penicillin is just one of many subjects. If I am not misquoting my informant, three thousand new drugs appear on the market every year.

I talked to a chemical research worker, considered exceptionally gifted, who abandoned her career and bore her second child not long ago. She had no second thoughts about it and wanted a third child.

"Look, specialization is proceeding at such a rate that if you're keen on your work and don't want to be left behind you have to make a lot of sacrifices. We women have to make one more than men: the bearing of children. In certain professions you mustn't be left behind, because the consequences may be formidable. Think of those five thousand limbless children—the victims of Thalidomide! Either—or."

"If it goes on like this," she went on, "mankind in the distant future will have to go over to the termite method of reproduction—procreation will be a separate occupation."

Men and Women

One should not pass over silence an old but currently sharpening antagonism between men and women. The men appeal to tradition, the women to altered circumstances. The conflict appears in one form within the family, in another within the professions.

Despite the fact that the state supports the employment of women with propaganda as well as institutions for the purpose, such as creches, nurseries, factory canteens, etc. some men do not take their women colleagues seriously, regardless of their academic attainments, capabilities and achievements, simply because they are women. This frequently happens in agriculture. A woman agronomist,

let alone a woman veterinary surgeon, must work twice as hard to gain recognition.

The other day I was in a court-room listening to a case. The presiding judge was a remarkably good-looking woman. In the interval I asked an elderly solicitor taking part in the proceedings what he thought of the way she was conducting the hearing.

"Oh, the angel cake! I just adored her as she quoted paragraphs right and left, wriggling on her darling little bum all the while."

"But it's not a job for a woman," he added waving a hand.

Being tactful, I did not like to ask him whether being a solicitor was a job for a man who listens to what's going on in court with half an ear, while ogling the learned judge with myopic eyes.

One remarkable consequence of the mass employment of women is the development of variations within the traditional western forms of the family. The ideal version is a family in which the equality of the husband and wife does not remain in the realm of theory as an attractive legal formula, but is translated into practice in an equal division of the burdens. The wife cooks, but the husband washes up, the wife does the cleaning, but the husband brings up the coal from the cellar—if district or central heating has not yet been introduced, etc. This is the form of the future, and it is spreading, though far from as much as it should. I caught a glimpse of the trend in an advertisement in one of the dailies.

"Man of such and such an age, position, income, excellent cook, seeks acquaintance of music-loving lady, etc." In Italy cooking courses are held for men, evidently to enhance their chances of marriage. Sooner or later we are going to need those courses too.

Far more common than the ideal of the future are the forms which only the men can regard as ideal now. The tradition that a woman should wait on her husband stubbornly continues, despite changed circumstances. A man expects his wife not only to run the house and look after the children, but also to be his personal servant: he sits down at table, reads his paper, and waits for his wife to bring in the supper, and get up and run to the kitchen or larder as often as something occurs to him: pepper, paprika, pickles or idea that "this would be nicer with some mustard."

"What do you mean there's no mustard?" the husband snaps. "What sort of a home do you call it where there isn't even mustard? Do you perhaps expect me to go and get some?"

The blame is put on a woman who is economically independent, works eight hours as her husband and may earn as much or more than him. But he still demands that the woman should cook, serve, put out a clean shirt and socks in the morning, etc., etc.

This is a new form of drama. It either destroys both parties in endless argument after the fashion of Strindberg or Albee, or only the woman, too weak to resist for long, who breaks, and bears the double burden as long as she can. Between these two extremes of course, there are innumerable intermediate positions.

Working women fall roughly into two main groups the women with any sort of training and those who work in the home. The two groups consist equally roughly of the young on the one hand and of the elderly on the other. Let me add parenthetically that the employment of girls between 14 and 18 has been decreasing in the past few years with many advantages for both the community and the individual.

All this has brought about the grandmother-based family of today. Whether she works or is on a pension, her income is small, because she has no qualifications, and the family is therefore better off if the grandmother takes charge of the house and the children and the younger woman goes out to work. This is a historical necessity, no doubt. The conflicts here are not so various and lively as those among the younger group. Being deprived of a wide choice of possibilities, the commonest and most frequent conflict here for the grandmother is the choice between the family or solitude.

"I've brought up five children and eight grandchildren," said a rosy-faced old woman. "I'm running the house and I'm the finance minister too. I've no cause to complain, my children are good to me and they help a lot, and sometimes they take me to the theatre. The kids are nice too. But education is a very difficult job. In my days the grandparents and the kids were united by a kind of solidarity, you know. It's not the same now, and the ties between the grandparents and the grandchildren are different from what they used to be."

I know this myself. Formerly the grandparents often took the part of the grandchildren without, of course, this solidarity being directly aimed against the parents. The grandparents were simply indulgent in order to win the children's affection. To how many childish pranks was our grandmother a silent party, without ever telling on us! It would be difficult indeed to expect the same loyal services of grandparents today. The gulf between the generations is deeper today, and two societies stand opposed to each other in both the parent-child and the grandparent-grandchild relationship. The centre has shifted from the family to collective education, and the family relationship has undergone a radical transformation. The father and the mother spend about ten hours away from home and when they come in they are tired and anyway the hour or two they devote to their children counts very little compared with the influence of the day-nursery or school.

The emotional and often financial defencelessness of grandmothers naturally leads to abuses. A woman of forty, still in good repair, with three children, fell in love with a childless ornithologist of dubious morality. At first the man promised her the world to induce her to divorce her husband, including the promise that he would take on the children and care for them. The children, however, wanted to remain with their father. At this the woman left home, dumping her divorced husband and three children on to her seventy-year-old mother. The grandmother loved the children and was on good terms with her son-in-law. She did her duty without

asking, but she came very close to a breakdown in trying to meet responsibilities she no longer had the strength to undertake. The woman—now the wife of the ornithologist—was asked why she did not do something to help mother, why she did not, for instance, pay for the board of the children.

"I've kept my mother till now," she replied with dignity, "now it's time her other children looked after her."

"She kept her mother?" an acquaintance said whom I asked in the matter, shaking his head. "Apart from actually giving birth to the children, and of course the preliminary operations, the grandmother did everything else for her. How could she have gone to work except for her mother looking after the three children at home?"

This sort of thing does not happen very often, but the argument that went with it is very common. Many daughters "keep" their mothers in this way. Sometimes so much so that the person kept dies of it. She does in fact keep her, but she forgets that this way she saves the money she would have to spend on domestic help. The working daughter earns two thousand a month, a daily help twelve hundred, the gain is eight hundred. If the grandmother does the cha'r work as well, the gain increases to two thousand plus the moral profit, "I keep my mother." This kind of parasitism is unfortunately not uncommon today.

Not every grandmother is an angle, one need hardly say. I know a young couple who were brought together by their mothers, who both promised them a flat. First they went to live with the boy's mother, but the daughter-in-law and the mother-in-law could not get on with each other. Then they moved to the girl's mother's. Here their peace was wrecked by the continual harping of the mother-in-law: "Your mother promised all kinds of things, but it's me who does the giving." Today the couple lives in a furnished room for one-fifth of their combined salaries and bicker over their mothers-in-law.

The final conclusion: It is a fact that the socialist system has emancipated women. But it is equally a fact that women do not always know what to do with their rights and freedom, and society does not always know what to do with the emancipated women. This is a transient state of affairs, of course, which means that in many respects it will go on forever.

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DISCUSSION

Discussion on West Bengal United Front was started in Mainstream (February 14, 1970) by Prof Arun Bose. It was followed by a contribution from Prof C R Rathee (Mainstream, February 28) An article by Sri Satyapal Dang on "United Fronts: Pitfalls and Prospects" in the same issue, also touched on the West Bengal experiences.

Revolution is the Issue

K. K. SINHA

SRI Arun Bose's article (*Mainstream*, February 14) is straightforward and frank. It should help parties critical of the CPM to understand where they stand and how the CPM's mind is working.

If a revolution has to be brought about (Sri Bose possibly refers to this when he speaks of "serious politics"), it cannot be done by a multiplicity of parties even if they all call themselves Communist or Marxist. The aim of serious revolutionaries must logically be to utilise the UF Government to bring about and strengthen one single Communist Party. This the CPM is trying to do. The rest of the issues are only incidental and inconsequential. Revolution has to be led by a political general staff and it cannot afford to have any sense of autonomy or separateness within such staff.

I, therefore, can understand Sri Arun Bose's line of thinking when he minces no words—of course, he could be more frank—in discussing UF policies and suggest that only "monolithic" units should execute policies. If this goes against the other "temporary allies" it cannot be helped. But this is the essence and spirit of Leninism. Leninists should not object to it, just because their own faction happens to be weaker than the CPM.

I must say that the CPM deserves full credit for what it has achieved in one single year through the United Front Government. It has been able to undermine the sense of authority and respect for the state, it has

weakened the morale of the administration and the police and has even paralysed its coercive apparatus; it has infiltrated the state apparatus at all levels, it has built up a powerful party apparatus extending its influence and strength, and it has buttressed the same with an aggressive para-military "volunteer" force, and, finally, it has been able to confuse and flabbergast most of its allies by semantic gymnastics on the one hand, and good thrashing and murder at lower levels. The three preconditions of a revolutionary situation adumbrated by Lenin, are thus fast maturing. This is indeed a fantastic achievement in so short a time, even by Leninist standards.

If this perspective is kept in the mind, then Sri Arun Bose's position that (a) there should be no curtailment of powers of the Minister for Home, (b) the monolithic party-based volunteer organisation should be handed over the duties of the police while the latter should be increasingly withdrawn, (c) the inter-party criticism should be fully allowed; and (d) the Chief Minister should be only a decorative Chairman of meetings, is hard not to agree with.

This pattern of the UF Government should in due course—or perhaps earlier still—help make the CPM the *leading party* in the Leninist sense, with the rest 13 as sycophant-satellites, guiding the people of West Bengal to revolution and dictatorship.

The other UF partners which

are revolutionary and even Marxist should not object to this evolution of the UF merely because this dialectical development makes the CPM, and not any other party, play the leading role. After all, revolution cannot be *jointly* made, dictatorship cannot be *joint*. If revolution is a prior value and is seriously meant, the ego of the other parties should be submerged for the common aim.

I may make my position clear here. I do not think the West Bengal people's interests, even of the workers and peasants and of the agricultural labourers, would be served by Revolution. For, what is needed urgently and for the next decade or two is a climate, political and economic, conducive to an inflow of massive investment of capital in both industry and agriculture of the order of Rs 2000 crores or so at least—and only then the condition of the peasant and the worker and the middle-class would improve. This prospect would be completely inhibited by "revolutionary" politics, and even *after* the revolution the same problem will have to be confronted with in an aggravated form, and again capital will have to be invited, may be from Moscow or Peking or, worse still, from the much abused World Bank. Only, the social situation and the terms would be much worse than today.

But, if even then revolution is the aim, I believe the CPM strategy and tactics is the most fruitful and logical.

Let us therefore be clear first whether we are for revolution *per se*,

or is revolution a means to an end, namely the welfare of the people of West Bengal. But in any case let us not coddle our-

selves with the belief that UF is a place for honeymooning of parties. Sri Arun Bose is very right on this score.

Parties of the Third International creates illusion about the revolutionary role of the bourgeois parties. It is time that the leaders of the Communist Party of India (Marxists) admit that the only correct revolutionary path is that of building a Toilers' Front and not a United Front. Their style of functioning which has annoyed and frightened their allies in the United Front could be acceptable only in the context of a Toilers' Front.

I hope that this self-criticism will soon be forthcoming from the leaders of the CPI(M). This is necessary all the more because they are today the biggest political party in West Bengal and Kerala. They should give up the illusion of running bourgeois parliamentary system and take to the path laid down by Trotsky.

Sri Dasgupta must struggle against others in his party who do not accept this concept of the unity front of toilers and still cling on to the illusion of a united front with bourgeois parties. This is an ideological challenge before the leaders of CPI(M) which they must not be afraid to take up.

I appeal to Sri Promode Dasgupta to fully understand the significance of their own experience and come out in defence of the political and ideological position that his own admission dictates to him.

West Bengal and Trotsky

DHRUBA GANGULY

You have been good enough to publish different points of view when the crisis came in the Kerala United Front with the resignation of Sri Namboodiripad, and in West Bengal where a more agonising situation is to be noticed: the United Front partners have been fighting each other not only in open polemics but in physical clashes.

It is necessary that a journal of the standing of *Mainstream* should spotlight the situation of West Bengal and give adequate expression to the different and conflicting points of view on this crisis.

I am only a humble spectator of the developments in West Bengal. However, I cannot resist commenting that the basic mistake of the parties of the Left was to have formed a united front with parties whose ideologies are different from theirs. In this connection, I am heartened to note that CPM leader Sri Promode Dasgupta, has openly come out in support of a united front of classes instead of united front of parties.

This was the position which was expected of the parties of the Left even before the 1967 General Election. But somehow they got involved in the united front of parties with different ideologies which culminated in the present crisis.

In this connection I would like to recall that the experiment of United Front even in Western countries was challenged by earnest revolutionaries from its very beginning. The parties of the

Fourth International which have never deviated from a relentless line in promoting proletarian revolution, have never accepted the concept of United Front as propounded by the Third International, and later on by the Communist Parties.

Sri Dasgupta should have the courage of conviction to admit that his experience in West Bengal has proved the correctness of the Thesis of the Fourth International which was laid down by Leon Trotsky. In this connection, I would request him and his comrades to study deeply Trotsky's work, *Permanent Revolution*, and also basic documents of the Fourth International.

In our view the United Front as conceived by the Communist

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INDIAN UNIVERSITIES : US-STYLE INTRUSION

(Continued from page 16)

English in our Universities have obtained their degrees from American Universities and they are the strongest links between the American interests and Indian students. Quite a good number of them make frequent trips to the USA as visiting professors.

These foreign joints are often taken at the cost of student neglect. Two years ago there was an instance of the two Professors of English in a South Indian University who left for the USA as Visiting Professors leaving the Department to the care of only a Reader.

In many universities essays, poems and stories by American writers are prescribed for compulsory study. While one has to acknowledge the greatness of many American writers like Robert Frost and O Henry, one cannot say the same of Chester Bowles or Robert Kennedy. The Americans have been making a very successful use of the bright images of their liberal Presidents like Abraham Lincoln and John Kennedy. Here is a sentence from a short biography of Abraham Lincoln prescribed for the Pre-university students of the Osmania University "For had there been no Abraham Lincoln there might well have been no powerful United States of America to stand forth in the hour of need as a protector of the oppressed and a champion of freedom." It is clear that the attempt here is to present a benevolent image of Uncle Sam as the great friend of all oppressed nations. By whom are they oppressed is of course left quite vague. We have yet to discover a single instance in world history of the Americans fighting for the emancipation of the colonies oppressed by the imperialists. No wonder the young boys and girls, taking their annual examination, wrote the same thing in an assessment of Lincoln's character.

Here is another sentence from the same text "He had preserved the unity of the American nation, and by so doing had saved for the world a whole continent where a great democracy might rise, and men might live free from the rage

and tyranny of tyrants." The meaning is obvious and its effect is also very subtle.

Here is a sentence from the biography of Thomas Masaryk written by an American called Egon Larsen "I do not accept communism," he said, "It may be possible, but only among brothers, in the family, in a religious or a friendly community, it can only be kept up by real love. Revolutions or dictatorships can sometimes abolish bad things, but they never create good or lasting ones." So, the writer praises Masaryk for "he had made his country a Western democracy." This biography of Masaryk was one of its six short biographies found in the text book which was originally intended for study.

In the essay on J. F. Kennedy by his brother Robert, we find a sentence which lays the same stress on the role of the U.S. Government as the gendarme for the whole world "The energies and talents of all of us are needed to meet the challenges—the internal ones of our cities, our farms, ourselves—to be successful in the fight for freedom around the globe." Robert Kennedy's preface to *Profiles in Courage* has served a useful purpose for the American agents of subversion. The idea has been repeatedly stressed in many lessons that the USA is a valiant fighter for the freedom of oppressed nations.

Let us know what Chester Bowles has to say about "the essentials of nation building" in his essay prescribed for the same class of students of the Osmania

University. The first and foremost essential of nation building is "Adequate capital from both domestic and foreign sources". Bowles makes his intention still more clear when he says that these essentials of nation building "permitted the amazing resurgence of Europe and Japan from the rubble and despair created by World War II." These essentials are meant however only for the underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Gentlemen, follow the capitalist path, there is no other path for you, Bowles seems to say. However, if the capitalist path is all that capable of spreading sweetness and light, what are the reasons for the problems and tensions in America itself? Chester Bowles is such an innocent man that he does not know the problems in his own backyard. If Uncle Sam is such a noble philanthropist, always coming to the rescue of other people in distress, he should at least have solved the problems of the poorer section in America.

It is still a mystery why this essay has been prescribed for study. Is Chester Bowles a great American writer? Who recommended the essay by Bowles to be included? What has been the part played by the local American Studies Research Centre in the framing of such text books?

The answers to these questions will reveal many more things about the activities of the so-called Cultural and Research Centres.

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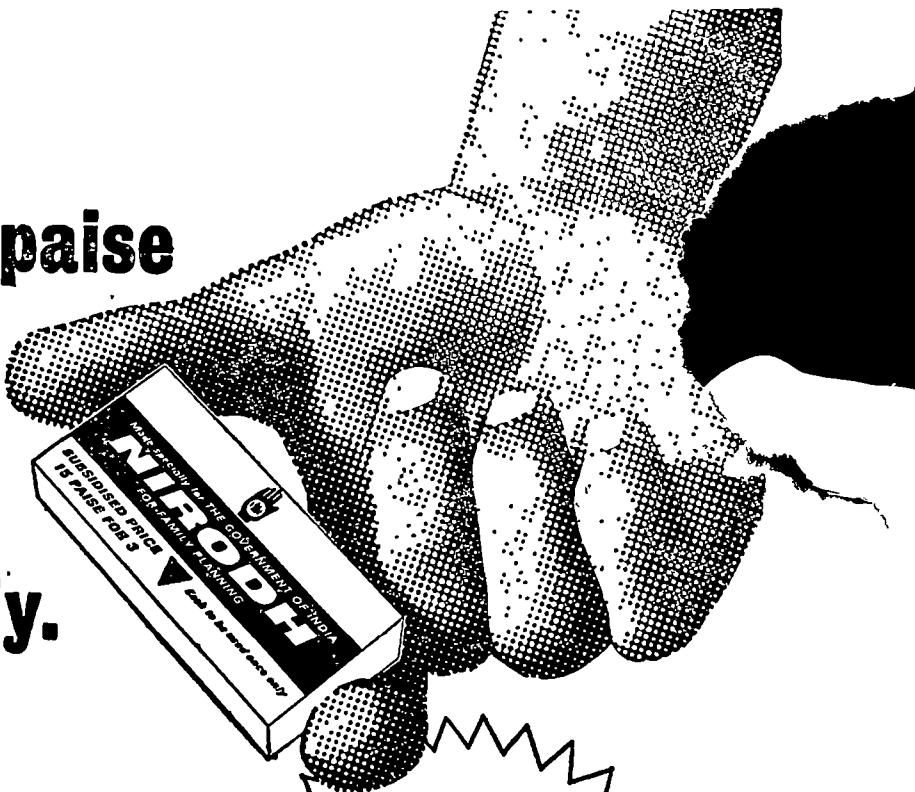
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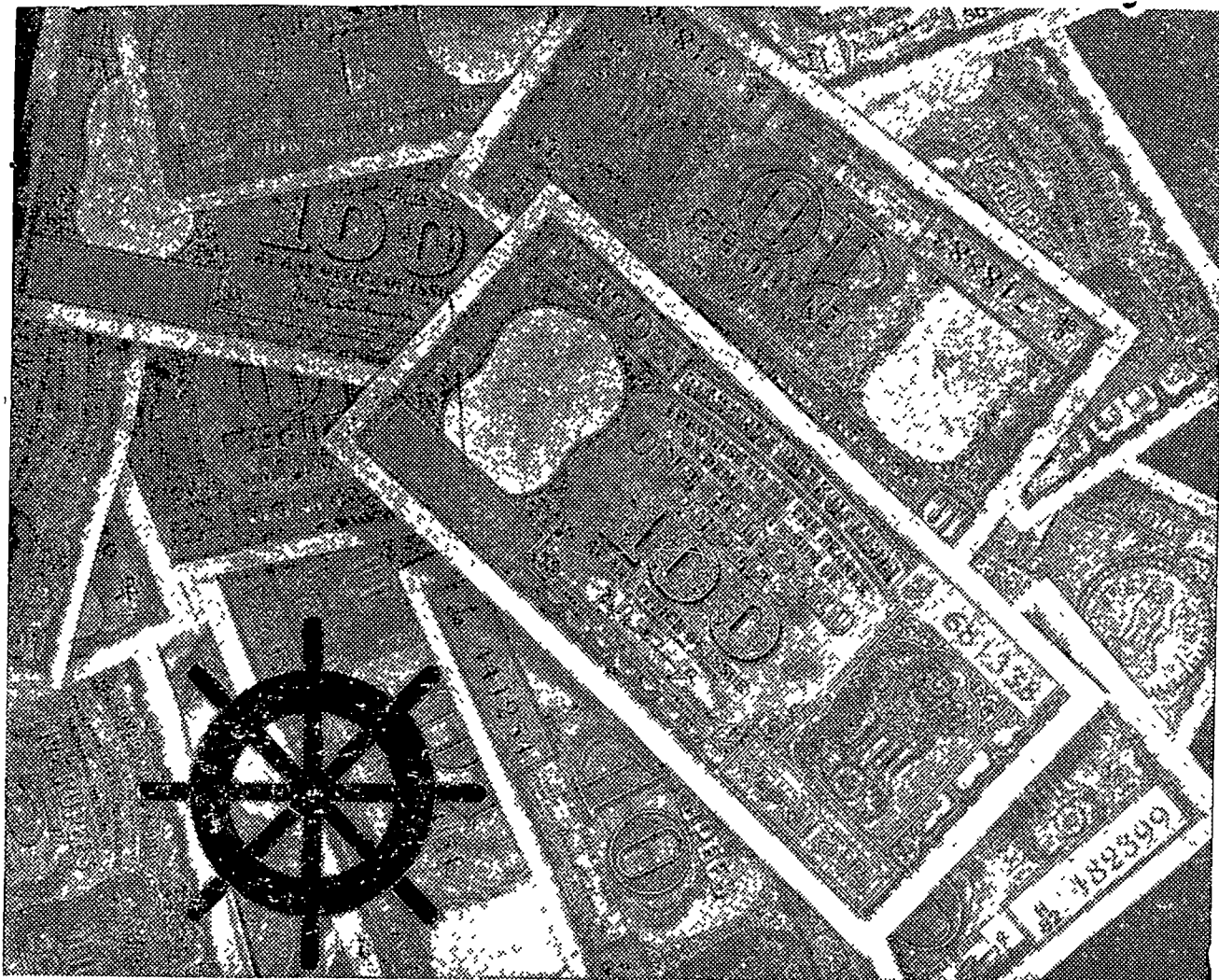
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Giri's Lead

THERE is nothing original or startling about any of the items carefully enumerated by Sri V.V. Giri in his "jobs for our millions" plan, yet it has commanded immediate and widespread attention in the country. This is not merely because of the position he occupies in the nation as its constitutional head. The interest the outline has evoked is due to the fact that this is the first time anyone in authority has candidly and painstakingly taken a comprehensive view of the economic situation in rural India and attempted to find a satisfactory answer to the major problems of the rural masses who constitute the bulk of India's population.

Sri Giri has rightly assessed that the foremost task of all those engaged in directing the national economic effort is to tackle the frightening problem of mass unemployment and under-employment on a scientific basis, to utilize in the most fruitful manner the vast reservoir of manpower available, in the country, relating it in every region to the enormous natural resources begging to be exploited intelligently. The basis of approach to the task is to be found in the Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution wherein the right of the citizen to an adequate means of livelihood is laid down as the sheet-anchor of national policy.

So far the Directive Principles have constituted no more than a dim and often blurred background to the functioning of Parliaments, the Legislatures and the State and Central Governments. The right to unlimited private property for the few has come to be seen as more sacrosanct than the right of the vast poverty-stricken majority to work and a decent living. The values enshrined in the Directive Principles have now and then received hypocritical lip-service without any serious attempt being made to translate them into reality for our millions who continue to be under-nourished, exploited and deprived of the most meagre amenities essential for a human existence. Nowhere is this tragic fact more dramatically obvious than in the villages of India where three-quarters of our people live, economic disparities have continued to be huge and millions live below or at the poverty line.

This is the background against which Sri Giri's proposals have to be viewed for their full significance to be understood. The scheme is not born of a sudden outburst of concern as in the case of some others, but is the result of serious thinking spread over three decades and more. Sri Giri as convener of the National Planning Committee set up by the Congress in the late thirties had occasion long before Independence to discuss the basic problems of an economy deliberately kept backward by the colonial power, and along with Jawaharlal Nehru and Visvesvaraya he came to the conclusion that the key was national planning "related to a total programme of manpower utilization for the benefit of all sections of the people." In fact this was the basis of the planning which Jawaharlal not only advocated but initiated after the achievement of Independence, but

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Views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and not necessarily of this journal

various factors came in the way of this ideal being translated into action, with the result that Sri Giri is now driven to the sad conclusion that "the planning programmes do not seem to have made any appreciable impact on rural and urban unemployment and under-employment". The estimates he has cited in respect of the number of unemployed and under-employed persons may not represent the whole truth, but the figures are staggering enough 50 to 100 million in the first category and 100 to 170 million in the second. Hence the urgency and importance of the elaborate scheme Sri Giri has outlined broadly.

There may be difference of opinion about Sri Giri's reluctance to interfere with the existing unbalanced rural economic set-up but there can be no quarrel with his proposition that the provision of employment for the masses has to be scientifically related to the twin tasks of increasing agricultural productivity substantially and establishing a network of small-scale rural industries which will help both to produce essential goods and to supplement the incomes of those to be engaged in farm production. To begin with, the scheme envisages cultivation of all waste lands "under nobody's ownership": "Let us begin even with rocky land and convert it into a fertile farm". The value of the proposal lies in the fact that India today has vast tracts of land which can with effort and expenditure be brought under cultivation and have not been tackled so far only because of the lack of courage to make the mighty effort needed to raise resources and put to constructive use the vast untapped manpower potential going waste in the countryside.

So huge a task, and one aimed at providing fruitful occupation to the millions, can obviously be undertaken only on a cooperative basis, and this is precisely what Sri Giri has formulated. The land ceiling law and movements like Bhoodan have been largely ineffective because the process stopped with the distribution of land to the landless, where this was permitted by the rural vested interests. An impoverished landless labourer can hardly be blamed if hunger drives him to part with the land to money-lenders, rich landlords or others of that kind in return for the wherewithal to appease his hunger. The virtue of the scheme lies in the fact that it recognizes this truth which has become evident over the years and seeks to provide a satisfactory solution. The solution is the formation of cooperatives of those who are to benefit by the scheme and the provision of not only the requisites to convert waste land into fertile soil but also of adequate income for each member of the cooperative till such time as the fields turn green and begin yielding rich returns.

The land cooperatives have thus to be preceded by a countrywide "network of multi-purpose pilot projects for absorbing the surplus manpower". The members of the cooperatives will not only be competent cultivators but also skilled artisans in one field or another, so that their employment will not be seasonal but will be spread over the whole year. The emphasis is not on doles and efforts from above as in the case of the community development project which has failed miserably for this very reason but on effective participation by the would-be beneficia-

ries themselves. Assistance from outside will only be in the shape of credit facilities and the provision of other materials the cooperatives will need but cannot produce themselves. For the rest success of the scheme will depend entirely on the determination mutual cooperation and dedicated endeavour of the member of the cooperatives themselves.

Sri Giri has mentioned some of the many subsidiary occupations that the rural masses can take up: house construction, drainage, rural crafts and industries, poultry farming, vegetable gardening, horticulture, bee-keeping, etc. It is envisaged that in the colonies set up under the scheme each colonist will be familiar with three or four of the subsidiary occupations, what is sought is "the transformation of layman into progressive farmers and artisans". A comprehensive programme of training for this purpose is outlined, too, and agro-industries based on power have not been forgotten. The stress is naturally on labour-intensive projects all round, in respect of which the capital and equipment needed will not be large and "all members of the family can participate in the production process". The idea is to eliminate the total dependence of a whole family on a sole breadwinner, the death or disablement of one will not render a whole family destitute, for the others will continue their work and earn as before.

Where we went wrong in the case of community development projects is succinctly pinpointed by Sri Giri when he says that the network of 6500 blocks "would have been more successful if only they had catered to the principal objective of relieving unemployment and generated and mobilized all the people's energies towards this purposeful goal". Since the groundwork has been done in the blocks he suggests that in each of them at least one cooperative land colonization project should be started forthwith as a pilot programme.

Although Sri Giri has spelt out a number of things to be done both immediately and in the future, the scheme is only a broad outline covering all aspects. Details have to be filled in. But there is no time to be lost if the situation arising from rural tensions and massive frustration is to be changed speedily. Most of our planning has gone awry so far as rural India is concerned only because of wrong approach which left out the most vital factor, namely, the human being in the village. What is needed now is speedy action on the basis of the correct approach spelt out in Sri Giri's document. The Central and State Governments have the major responsibility in formulating and implementing plans on the new lines, no doubt, but it is not the task of Government alone in our new situation all the political parties have a part to play in mobilizing the people and ensuring that the schemes outlined are in fact implemented without delay.

The lapses of the last two decades can be made up at least in the next decade and the face of rural India transformed if only all sections join hands to bring about the change. To fail to do so will be to lay the foundation for greater frustration and resentment among the rural masses and for the violence that will be the natural consequence of such a situation.

West Bengal Lessons

THE tragic developments in West Bengal in which senior leaders of the United Front were found squabbling in earnest, evoked mixed reactions in New Delhi. Different political circles have been looking at the discredit of the United Front experiment from their own specific angles.

It is significant that despite the cry of the breakdown of law and order in the State by the Chief Minister himself, there has been a conspicuous reticence on the part of the Centre to attack the State Government as being ineffective, this is in marked contrast to the stand that the Central leaders took during the first United Front Ministry in West Bengal in 1967. Incidentally, on the other side, too, one hardly finds the West Bengal Ministry attacking the Centre for being discriminatory against the State Government—the theme which was very common during the 1967 tenure of the United Front Ministry.

The reasons for the caution with which the Centre has been treating the West Bengal developments are many. For one thing, the Union Home Ministry is aware of the explosive situation in the agrarian sector all over the country. From its own study it has come to realise that social tensions breaking out in the countryside cannot be dismissed as a mere case of breakdown of law and order. It is noteworthy that the massive movement in West Bengal for the occupation of fallow land by poor peasants and agricultural labourers as also the latest round of harvest being taken over by the tiller himself has not led to as much uproar at the Centre as one would have expected in the past; in fact, in the present climate of effusive talk about the need to implement land reforms broadcast by the

Congress leaders themselves, the direct action by political parties in West Bengal on this score could hardly be denounced.

There is reason to believe that in the considered assessment of responsible authorities at the Centre, the developments in the countryside in West Bengal are regarded, in the main, as the manifestation of the consolidation of the political hold of the different Left parties, particularly of the two Communist Parties, in their respective areas.

It is equally significant that the 1967 cry about the disruption of the entire industrial set-up in West Bengal hardly finds an echo today in responsible quarters in New Delhi. One of the outstanding features of the tenure of the United Front Ministry has been the mammoth strikes in jute, plantation, engineering and textile industries. The concessions the employers had to make on each of these counts were brought about largely because of the united action of trade unions of all complexion, drawing in a large measure even the INTUC. Despite this cornering of the vested interests, it is significant that the red-bogey that West Bengal is lost to the nation, is not being raised today in as strident a manner as in 1967.

The reason behind all this circumspection is that the ruling elite in this country has come to realise that they cannot rule in the old way; wisdom seems to have dawned on a large section of it about the disastrous consequences of following the wooden-headed status quo policy. The failure of the Dharam Vira adventurism in toppling the first United Front Ministry also had its impact on the psychology of the vested interests.

The Congress split, in its turn, has forced a new approach to

the West Bengal United Front. No longer can Smt Gandhi's camp indulge in the adventurism of 1967 when it tried clandestinely to take Sri Ajoy Mukherjee back into the Congress and thereby topple the United Front Ministry. For one thing, Sri Ajoy Mukherjee has realised the unwisdom of going back into the discredited outfit of the Congress itself and has understood the mass mood in West Bengal for politics to be attuned towards Left-orientation.

Secondly, Smt Gandhi's camp has to move carefully to mobilise all forces against the Syndicate and its allies in Parliament, it has therefore to take a positive approach to the Left elements and cannot afford to go in for a crusade against the Communists. Under the circumstances, the Indira Congress has been extremely careful in handling the West Bengal United Front.

This is why despite reports of some CPM leaders' talks with some of the Syndicate leaders and despite the Syndicate's significant overtures to the CPM, the point which the Indira Congress leadership tries to emphasise in the Capital is CPM's declaration that the Syndicate-Jana-Sangh-Swatantra axis is a reactionary combine.

Similarly, the Syndicate also is careful in chalking out its approach towards the West Bengal developments. It is not taking a straight line of outright attacking the West Bengal United Front despite the temptation of denouncing Smt Gandhi for being indulgent towards the Communist-led State Government. Sri Atulya Ghosh's initiative led to the cancelling of the idea of attacking United Front in West Bengal by a resolution at the Syndicate Working Committee meeting. It is clear that Sri Atulya Ghosh and his group would try their

utmost to fish in the troubled waters of West Bengal United Front, its main target being the Indra Congress at the moment, and not any other party.

THE disarray in West Bengal United Front has no doubt been a setback for the progressive forces in general. When the United Front swept the polls in the mid-term election just a year ago, there was a wave of enthusiasm all over the country; with the growing crisis inside the Congress, the United Front was expected to show the way, how different parties with even different class alignments could work together for a minimum programme of advance. Even among Congressmen this had a perceptible impact, for, they looked forward to the success of the United Front in office as helping to bring together forward-looking Congressmen with the Left parties outside, in a common crusade against reactionary vested interests. Viewed in this context, it would perhaps not be an exaggeration to say that the triumph at the poll of the Left forces in Kerala and West Bengal had a definite bearing on the struggle against the Syndicate conservatism inside the Congress.

Specifically, the prospect of the Bangla Congress working in concert with the Left parties—particularly with the two Communist Parties—was followed with not only interest but great expectations as well; for, if the experiment succeeded, the possibility of such a get-together at other places, including at the national level was hopefully looked forward to by many Congressmen. The stock-in-trade propaganda by the pro-West lobby that the Communists are a dangerous and intolerant ally was largely belied when many sections of patriotic Congress opinion welcomed the West Bengal Communists' friendly relations with the Bangla Congress, leading to the installation of Sri Ajoy Mukherji as the Chief Minister.

The hopes in enlightened circles in New Delhi have been

largely shattered by the bitter crisis in the West Bengal United Front. On this point, the Right-wing forces in the Capital have been markedly jubilant at the fact that the larger section of West Bengal Communists represented by CPM, failed to patiently work out an equation with a party like the Bangla Congress, which by and large, represents the ideology and outlook of the average Congress dissident against the Syndicate.

The theory adumbrated by some of the Marxist Communist leaders that their conflict with the Bangla Congress was in essence the expression of the intensified class struggle unleashed by the awakened masses has not found favour even in progressive quarters in the Capital. While it was expected that there would be stresses and strains inside the United Front as its radical programme would come in for implementation the need to keep together even the most hesitant partner in the United Front in the face of the growing challenge of the Right is also emphasised. The reluctance shown by the CPM leadership in avoiding an extravagantly radical programme of action against all forces of vested interests at this specific stage of democratic advance, has been in marked contrast to its refusal to accommodate the Bangla Congress. The glib argument that the Bangla Congress was working as the agent of the vested interests and therefore had to be fought with vehemence was not convincing when one noticed that no party in the United Front—and quite sensibly—did go in for an immediate frontal confrontation with powerful Big Business houses at this initial stage of the United Front experiment.

It would however be incorrect to assume that the Bangla Congress leadership had won kudos in New Delhi. While Sri Ajoy Mukherji is generally respected, his political acumen has not always been appreciated. His epistolary exchanges with Sri Jyoti Basu had only a partial impact, for it was felt by many that his claims to supervisory powers over other Ministries could have been better

established had he set the convention right at the beginning of the formation of the United Front Ministry in 1967, or even after the mid-term poll in 1969, rather than after his rift with the CPM had already taken place. Secondly, he might have impressed New Delhi more had he referred to Sri Nambudiripad's claims as Chief Minister, rather than quoting outworn British precedents. The provocative postures of his lieutenant, Sri Sushil Dhara, were regarded as out of place in a United Front setting, just as many of Sri Promode Dasgupta's hectorings have threatened to spoil the CPM's image at the national level. In fact, it is felt in New Delhi that the appeals to Sri Ajoy Mukherji from the highest political circles not to resign, have been ineffective largely because of the intransigence of Sri Sushil Dhara's politics.

The general feeling in the Capital has been that the Left as a whole has missed a golden opportunity of setting new traditions of United-Front functioning for the democratic forces in the country. While the political responsibility for this missed opportunity is laid at the door of all Left parties, the CPM's share has inevitably been the largest since it is the largest single component in West Bengal politics today. Under the circumstances, it alone had the opportunity and authority to guide the United Front along positive lines and at the same time generate the sense of unity in the entire Front. Both the national interests and the long-range interests of its own party demanded of the CPM leadership the display of statesmanship that could have perhaps saved the United Front from the agonising spectacle of non stop bickering culminating in the Bangla Congress decision to quit the Front.

In this connection, there is a large body of opinion in New Delhi which feels that one of the major factors for the strains in the United Front is not so much the irreconcilability of class interests at this stage of radical advance, but the tragic civil-war relationship between the two

Communist Parties. Even if the split in the Communist movement could not have been averted, must the two CPs fight in bitter acrimony with an almost nihilist perspective? On this score, too, while the responsibility of the CPM is regarded as greater—particularly in West Bengal where it is greater in strength—the average Congressman who is bereft of any prejudice against the Communists, spares neither of the two CPs. There is little doubt in his mind that if the two Communist Parties had stood together, it would have helped to generate a more dispassionate outlook in the ranks of the Communists as a whole and thereby led them to mobilise all forces ranged against reaction.

The intra-party clashes very often violent are not an unknown feature of the political history of Bengal as they were common from the days of the warring factions among the revolutionaries, the so-called “terrorists”. However, it was expected of every section of Communist leadership to concentrate more on mass mobilisation rather than on acid-bulb adventurism, the discredited tactics of the Ranadive era of 1948-49.

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WITH all the divisions in the United Front—and the acrimony generated among the parties, the powerful forces of vested interests, particularly the Big Business which is so well-entrenched in West Bengal, took the fullest advantage of the crisis. In some cases, they have played off one united front constituent against another, since they have come to realise that they cannot risk any frontal offensive against the United Front Ministry after the debacle of the strategy under Dharma Vira in 1967. What the Big Business fears most is the unity of the working-class forces; even within the short compass of one year they found that they had to yield major concessions to plantation, jute, engineering and textile workers, every time the trade unions put up a united stand.

Perhaps the most disconcerting feature of the United Front crisis has been the upper hand secured by the bureaucracy and the police. When the United Front Government was installed, the expectation of the West Bengal public as also of democratic forces all over the country was that they would be able not only to keep the police and the bureaucracy under control but to orientate them in a manner suited to a democratic regime. In other words, it was expected that from West Bengal would emerge what has come to be known, a “committed” bureaucracy. Unfortunately the squabbles inside the United Front, particularly the tussle between the Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister, brought about a situation where senior officers started merrily in indulging in factional politickings, and quite a few unscrupulous elements both in the police and in the Secretariat, took it as a god-send since it helped them to hide the skeletons in their own cupboards. If an objective study is made of the violent clashes in different parts of West Bengal during the last six months, it would be seen that in many cases it was the sinister role of the police exploiting differences in the political leadership of the Government which had been responsible for such incidents. Thus the United Front Government instead of politicalising the bureaucracy and the police, strengthened their capacity for mischief in fighting or disrupting democratic forces.

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ONE year's experience of West Bengal United Front has many things to teach and it is expected of the leaders of the Left in West Bengal to come together and dispassionately draw the correct lessons of their many and varied experience. The plus points of the United Front Ministry, if a sober assessment is made, outweigh its minus features, and it is time that once again the parties of the Left should re-dedicate themselves in the service of the masses by concentrating on the implementa-

tion of the 32-Point Common Programme of the United Front. They have also to set agreed norms of conduct so that a new tradition of democratic functioning could be established. It is time for them to bury the hatchet that threatens to kill them all; and in this the CPM as the leading party in West Bengal politics has to take the initiative and prove the qualities of statesmanship expected of its leading position.

For the last two months, the CPM carried on a tearing campaign in West Bengal that any attempt at forming a reshuffled Ministry dropping out any constituent party of the United Front would be a betrayal of the people's mandate and so there must be a fresh verdict of the electorate at the poll. But within hours of Sri Ajoy Mukherji announcing his party's decision to withdraw from the Ministry, Sri Promode Dasgupta was found offering a CPM-led Mini Front outfit, quietly forgetting the old thunder about betrayal of the people's verdict. Such indecent demonstration of double-standard somersaults may be good meat for political upstarts in Haryana or Madhya Pradesh but can never be in keeping with the finest traditions of West Bengal's radical politics, of which the CPM rightly claim to be the inheritor.

West Bengal offers the greatest opportunity for the experiment of a democratic government pledged to a radical programme of advance. At the same time, its experience can very well be taken as a warning for the entire country, that is, if the Left parties lose their bearing in short-sighted squabbles and skirmishes, they would not only be betraying the trust of the people but would objectively help the forces of reaction to make a bid for a come-back. It is no accident that Cariappa's call for army rule came on the very day the crisis in the West Bengal United Front reached its peak point. Viewed from New Delhi, West Bengal's significance, one way or the other, can hardly be minimised.

N.C

March 10

Budget and Economic Perspective

A.K. BISWAS

THE new Budget proposals constitute in several respects, a refreshing departure from the tone set by a period of prolonged plan holiday, and a complete lack of perspective on the fiscal front. Though the corporate sector is left untouched, the changes introduced in Wealth Tax, levy on urban property, taxation of trusts and the introduction of excise duties on a whole range of semi luxury and luxury items, are commendable efforts in boosting up the fiscal machinery which, for several preceding years, had failed to provide any meaningful orientations for a renewed developing effort.

I do not subscribe to the argument that the maintenance and strengthening of the investment climate in the private sector calls for non-intervention at the moment; but if it is to be construed as a breathing spell which is necessary to work out an effective scheme of rationalisation of business and company taxation in the near future, then one need not get unnecessarily worried. But more of this at an appropriate place.

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COMING to concrete measures, the new provisions in the Wealth Tax, levy on urban property and taxation of discretionary trusts, if properly implemented, are fully justified on grounds of equity and enrichment of the exchequer. The present rates on wealth which vary between 0.5 per cent to three per cent, are now raised to one per cent at the lowest slab and five per cent at the highest slab, so that for an individual who derives his entire income from wealth, the combined effect of income and wealth taxation is now supposed to impose an effective ceiling on income after tax at approximately Rs 25,000 per annum.

Two welcome features in the additional levy on urban property are, first, the definition of urban areas to include those having a population of 10,000 or more (rather than one lakh or more, as it exists at present); and secondly, rationalisation and simplification of the provision for exemption, which was earlier made to depend on various categories of land and quite clearly left immense scope for avoidance and evasion of tax. Further, the rates are now substantially stepped up, being five per cent on the value of urban property in excess of Rs five lakhs and seven per cent on the value in excess of Rs 10 lakhs. The importance of these provisions,

which were long overdue, need not be exaggerated.

The premium on hoarding unproductive wealth in a country which suffers from abysmal poverty and a very skewed distribution of income and wealth, is in direct contradiction with the requirements of a minimal socialist programme; and there is every reason to drastically curb lavish expenditure on land and buildings. Again, the discriminatory treatment in favour of those who could claim exemption for a residential house, irrespective of value, in the event of its being located in an area with a population not exceeding 10,000, is replaced by a simpler and more legitimate provision of the exemption being limited to Rs one lakh only, irrespective of the location of the residential house.

The lowering of exemption limit of Rs 10,000 to Rs 5,000 in respect of gifts made during a year appears to be an improvement, but it does not effectively prevent the flowing of gifts in trickles and adding up to a sizable amount over a number of years and thus escaping the burden of the Gift Tax. To make the scheme really effective, Kaldor's suggestions of the integration of gifts¹ for the purpose of taxation is the only rational procedure. The individual making a gift will now have the option of spreading it over a longer period, or over a larger number of persons, to avoid the tax altogether. In any case, the lowering of the exemption limit and an upward revision of the rates in some of the slabs of the Gift Tax are measures in the right direction.

A more notable feature of the Budget proposals is the provision made to prevent avoidance of tax by the transfer of property through the creation of trusts. The incentive for this unhealthy proliferation of trusts leading to tax avoidance on a large scale lies in the lower rates on their income and wealth the rates being the same as applicable to individuals. The discretionary trusts are now to be taxed at (the flat rate of 65 per cent on their income and 1.5 per cent on their wealth (or at rates applicable to individuals, whichever is higher) and, undoubtedly, this is a step which should have been introduced much earlier. There is also a provision for checking tax evasion by diversion of funds under the guise of religious or charitable trusts.

¹N Kaldor, *Indian Tax Reform*, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, Chapter 4

THE levy of excise duties on a whole range of additional items which enter in the budget of higher income groups, including urban middle-class households, will make it somewhat difficult for housewives to entertain guests with tea (or Coca-cola) and sympathy. But if the preference is for a concealment of affluence (of varying degrees) by a well-managed portfolio of assets and savings in lieu of a revealed standard of living in keeping with the bandwagon, snob and demonstration effects, then the situation is not that despairing. For an alienated set of bureaucrats, professionals and academics, this may lead to an increase in the number of overseas trips so that the revealed standard of living is not substantially affected.

Very much will depend on the extent of price rise in a whole range of commodities (for example, all types of preserved foods, custard and ice-cream powders, drinking chocolate, biscuits, cheese and butter, instant coffee, stainless steel blades, squashes and aerated water on which fresh levies have been imposed and which enter into the budget of urban middle- and high-income groups) including those exempt from any additional duties. For, the price behaviour nowhere follows the pattern suggested by text-book versions of perfect competition, and particularly so in an economy like ours where the mode of mercantile exploitation is far-reaching and all pervasive.

There is no reason to suppose, in any case, that the increase in excise duties (on such items as free-market sugar, tea, petrol, etc.) or the new imposts will, by themselves, pose any threat of inflation and any measure to counter the ambivalent stance of reconciling radical postures with extravagant living need not be viewed with undue concern. Need anybody look askance at the teachers who join the rank of hippies or semi-hippies (for that's what you are if you have to shave with an ordinary blade, made in India) as a result of the imposition of taxes on stainless steel blades?

On the other hand, bachelors and childless couples in the lower income groups will benefit from the raising of the exemption limit of income-taxes from Rs 4,000 to Rs 5,000. Discrimination against persons who have to suffer the vagaries of public transportation (*vis-a-vis* those who are affluent enough to have cars and enjoy some exemption on that score) in pursuance of their vocation has been sought to be removed by giving a standard exemption of Rs 20 per month. The relief, though marginal, is a refreshing gesture against oddities and inequities what we suffer from today. The provision of a fund for a minimum family pension of Rs 40 per month in the case of industrial employees is in keeping with this spirit.

I mentioned earlier that the affluent section of the middle class consisting of salaried persons and self-employed professionals will have the opportunity to gain by a well-managed portfolio of their assets. For, the Budget proposals contain a provision that income up to Rs 3,000 will now be exempt from income-tax provided it is derived from investments in Unit Trust,

or shares in Indian companies, or Central and State Government securities, deposits in banks, co-operatives, and similar other institutions. Investments in these wide varieties of financial assets are also exempted from Wealth Tax up to a total of Rs 15 lakhs. This provides an opportunity for persons whose income-tax is deducted at source (and the scope for evasion is of a marginal nature), though self-employed professionals, small traders and the non-corporate business sector could still indulge in the customary practice of large-scale evasion by fully abstaining from submitting regular returns or by entering amounts which are considerably less than their actual income.

Though the relief provided to the low-income groups by the raising of the exemption limit is marginal, the release of administrative resources from handling the cases of a large number of assesseees is a substantial gain; and the maximum benefits from this can be reaped only in the context of a thorough overhaul of the administrative machinery. It is common knowledge that tax evasion by the high-income groups consisting of the propertied class and Big Business, is possible because of wire-pullings and political pressures at the highest echelons of the Government, particularly so in a system where a large number of representatives of the electorate and bureaucrats are systematically bribed by the rich tax-evaders. This challenge has to be faced at the political level by an enlightened electorate, and cannot be *effectively* met by face-saving administrative reforms.

I do not think that raising of the maximum marginal rate of income taxation is a judicious step, for taxation at that level of income can hardly be made operative, and the incidence of tax evasion will continue to remain as high as ever before at that level of income. Kaldor² has given very succinct reasons for a considerable lowering of the maximum marginal rate of income taxation, and for widening the base of direct taxation by the introduction of Personal Expenditure Tax. Though Expenditure Tax was twice introduced in the most mutilated form and repealed subsequently, there is no reason why it could not have been introduced now in a more streamlined manner with the loopholes properly plugged. Changes of a marginal nature will hardly suffice for reactivating the field of direct taxation.

If the Tax is introduced in a manner as to call for its eventual abolition (on grounds of very low yield and high administrative costs), then it does not in any way reflect on the intrinsic merits of the scheme, but clearly shows the failure of the Government to make any major effort with any degree of confidence, for whatever reasons it may be. If one wants to seriously defend the abolition of Expenditure Tax on the ground that it will be avoided in any case, then the case for a whole range of direct taxation falls to the ground. For, in practice, the incidence of evasion is already very high in the field of income-taxes. Expenditure Tax is an ideal device in such a situation, for the procedure of comprehensive return provides for mutual checks and makes considerable operational sense,

²*Ibid*, Chapter 4,

III

THE corporate sector has been left practically untouched except for the withdrawal of tax concessions for entertainment expenditure and expenditure on guest houses. I am not inclined to suggest that Government intervention in the private sector for the mere sake of intervention is sanctimonious, but at the same time, we must take note of the objective consideration that the private sector must conform to certain rules of the game in a framework of planned economic development. We have to clinch the ramifications of a basic question, namely, what kind of a mixed economy do envisage, which will serve the basic objectives of a socialist pattern of society in terms of distributive justice together with rapid economic development? This is a query which must be answered in depth and not in terms of just a few Industrial Policy Resolutions and *ad hoc* measures of controls and concessions.

I have earlier mentioned (*Mamsteram*, February 28) that the rationalisation of business and company taxation must be based on a thorough study of the various controls imposed on and the numerous fiscal and non-fiscal concessions enjoyed by the private sector. But we need not sit idle pending the availability of the results of such an enquiry, since there are enough studies at various levels which could be the starting point for some rethinking on the matter.

The least that could be done is to replace the present absurd definition of deductible expenses in case of business by a more rational and economic definition. "Whereas in the case of (a) an office, employment or pension, the deductible expenses are defined as those which are 'wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred in the performance of the duties of' the office or employment, in the case of (b) a business, profession or vocation, the expenses deductible are defined as those which are 'wholly or exclusively laid out for the purpose of' the business etc."³ (*italics mine*)

There is a clear discrimination against salaried persons and workers *vis-a-vis* independent business and professions where, in practice, the incidence of tax avoidance is pretty high. The definition of deductible expenses in the case of business notice the ambiguous phrase "for the purpose of" and the term "necessarily" which figures in case (a) but not in case (b)] leaves every scope for legal twists and evasion; and tinkering with various types of exemptions here and there not only makes the whole system cumbrous but also fails in removing the basic inequities. Deductible expenses in case (b) must be unequivocally defined as those which are incurred wholly, exclusively and unavoidably in earning the profits of the year.

Further, the very fact of a resumption of planning is going to give a boost to the private sector, and there is no reason to be wary about a possible disruption of the investment climate if the private sector is "touched". The benefits of planning have accrued in a substantive manner to the private sector on the lines of the so-called multiplier analysis; and

the mechanics of the process will be operative with a sizable increase in the plan outlays on a sustained basis. The moot question is whether the State should be under the overall dominance of the private sector and the Big Business (as in the UK and in the USA), or it should be otherwise in our country where the magnitude of the economic ills requires a very different type of prescription?

The proportion of Government expenditure to GNP in many of advanced Western countries are as much as, and even higher than in India, and tautologically they qualify as mixed economies, where the economic activities of the Government are of crucial importance in sustaining a steady rate of growth.

But what is the complexion of this mix? In the USA, the Government is under the subservience of Big Business corporations, which have spread and are continuing to spread its tentacles within and beyond its boundaries by nurturing the cold war, controlling the educational and scientific estates, promotion of various methods of political subversion, and by diverting a major proportion of Government income to serve the needs of a gigantic war machine.⁴ If we have to learn our lessons from economic history, I am not at all sure that we have as yet developed, in an operationally meaningful sense, the concept of a mixed economy which is humane as well as dynamic. For only in the context of such an articulated frame can we properly assess the role of the private sector.

IV

SOME of the commendable features of the Budget proposals may be briefly summarised.

(1) Changing the provisions relating to exemptions from tax of the incomes of charitable and religious trusts;

(2) Changing the provisions for taxation of discretionary trusts;

(3) Some relief to the low income groups by raising exemption limit of income-tax from Rs 4,000 to Rs 5,000;

(4) Provision of a minimum family pension for industrial employees;

(5) Additional outlay for programmes of rural development, particularly in areas prone to famine; special schemes for *small* farmers, setting up of an Urban Development Corporation with a revolving fund for financing activities such as slum clearance, housing and urban land development, provision of drinking water in areas which have no easy access to this basic requirement;

(6) Encouraging savings in rural areas and by low-income groups by the introduction of a new series of time deposits, recurring deposits, and savings certificates carrying a higher rate of interest but without any special tax concessions.

One of the significant gaps in the Budget is the lack of any perspective in respect of the role of the private sector in an economy which has chosen the path of planned economic development.

Practice is very different from professions, for

³*Ibid*, p 63.

⁴See J K Galbraith, *The New Industrial State* (1967) for a penetrating analysis of these issues.

if it were not so, our economic performance would have been much better than it has actually been. On the fiscal front, the potentiality in the field of direct taxation in terms of yield, redistribution of income and equity is much more than what is actually supposed, and in consequence, there is a greater reliance on indirect taxation, for it cannot fail to the same extent as its counterpart. Accrual of the full benefits of changes in some of the direct taxes is conditional upon the purposive removal of various constraints implied by the firm grip of the propertied class on our economy. It is not for me to pass any verdict as to whether the necessary changes are possible given the present alignment of the power structure and the limitations imposed by the Constitution.

Further a fuller analysis of the economic perspective requires a careful study of the magnitude, and more importantly, the composition of Plan outlay, and the programme of resource mobilisation as a whole. The Union Budget, though an important instrument, is just one among many such instruments and its role can be adequately assessed in the context of the Fourth Plan in its totality. Nonetheless, it may not be out of place to make a few pertinent observations.

First, the distribution of Plan outlay under different heads must derive its rational from its productive orientation, and not simply from considerations of distributive justice. The two criteria are inseparable, and the risks of treating them in isolation from each other is very great indeed. An overambitious programme of social overheads may end up in a total failure if it is not linked through an acceptable time and space, to a well articulated production programme. As Rene Dumont observes, "Any policy which prides itself on its social orientation in a backward country is sacrificing the hope of increasing production in order to gain immediate satisfaction. In the long run, it is anti-social. Improvements in social welfare could be financed by the beneficiaries themselves, who contribute their labour. In this way, schools and hospitals, and other social benefits will be the result of development, and be considered in a sense as a reward"⁵ *Planning from the bottom, or the grass roots*, is a concept which must be viewed in a clear perspective and not as a vulgar gimmick. It makes considerable sense in a country where the creation of employment must be an integral part of planning, and not be assigned just a peripheral role.

Secondly, there is a tendency in the name of building infrastructure to widen and reinforce a whole range of unproductive tertiary activities which

thrive on the surplus generated by the productive sector of the economy. Witness the proliferation of any number of research institutes which, on close scrutiny, will be found to be of dubious complexion, in the post-Independence and the Plan period. This is not to deny the importance of genuine research in promoting development, but the problems which are to be taken up for research must have some relevance in the context of the country's needs and resources. It will be hypocritical to pretend that many of these institutions are engaged in fundamental research for the noble purpose of the dissemination of knowledge.

It is not possible for an alienated intelligentsia which is drawn towards alien problems, and financed on a large scale by foreign funds, to deliver the goods. In consequence, we find an unhealthy growth of a basically parasitic tertiary sector which is almost completely divorced from any productive orientation, and suffering from the evils of a serious loss of identity. It is fundamentally the phenomenon of mercantile exploitation extending beyond the narrow confines of the merchant class, and including in its orbit all modes of parasitic existence.

Thirdly, any effective implementation of the Plan will call for a determined effort to hold the price line. If past experience is any guide, inflation is a serious threat when an increase in the rate of investment is accompanied by a sizable dose of deficit financing and commodity taxation on a large scale. This is aggravated beyond any reasonable limits to be explained by real shortage, if there are a few droughts and crop failures. Inflation in a country like India distorts completely the priorities of economic development by redistributing income in favour of the rich and the parasitic class, and thus failing to curb their conspicuous spending. On the other hand, it generates a demand for increased pay packets at various levels of the tertiary sector where, by definition, there cannot be any matching increase in production. Further, in a system where exploitation feeds and is, in its turn, fed by inflation, trade union activities take the form of demands for distributive justice, detached from any commitment to serious work effort.

In conclusion, it is only fair to point out that though the Budget proposals indicate some thinking on the right lines, any slackening of effort on a whole range of issues outlined above will lead to a failure of the economy being placed on the right track. To quote from Voltaire's *Candide*, the presumption that everything is best in the best of all possible worlds, will be ruinous, if the best of our efforts is confined only to some elementary rituals.

⁵Rene Dumont, *False Start in Africa*, Second Ed Praeger, 1969, p 48

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No Touch of Modernity

S.D. THAPAR

THE greatest merit of the Indira Gandhi Budget for the year 1970-71 is that it disturbs very few people. It is a status quo Budget, and most of us having got used to live with certain financial arrangements over a year, do not want any more changes, for good or for bad.

Among the immediate reactions to the Budget, the one made by Smt Tarkeshwari Sinha that it lacks direction, is the best said. If Smt Gandhi held hopes to bring socialism nearer, she has belied it. If She wanted the country to develop in the modern sense, the Budget is without a touch of modernity.

While it is difficult to disassociate politics from economic planning, the minimum which can be expected on the part of a Government is the clarity about the type of society it aims for the nation. In this context, while short-term measures to relieve immediate problems are inescapable, eyes should always be fixed at long-term solutions.

Now for the last many months, among the many problems that afflict the nation, the two which received the widest mention on the part of the Government had been the wide disparities in incomes, and the increasing unemployment both in the rural and urban areas. The question that can legitimately be asked about the current Budget is, if it promotes the desired objectives.

To help the poor, the exemption limit for income-tax has been marginally raised from Rs 4,000 to Rs 5,000. Also, the poor

salaried persons using cycles, motor-cycles, and public conveyance have been provided a minimum monthly deduction of Rs 20 in lieu of the cost of travel to work. As against it, the rates of taxation on personal incomes beyond Rs. 40,000 per annum have been put up.

Deduction allowed to car owners has been reduced from Rs 3000 per annum to Rs 2,400 per annum. Also the duty on petroleum products, including kerosene and petrol, has been raised. Similarly there is a little tinkering with the Wealth Tax, making savings in property on the part of the rich unattractive.

How far these measures would go to reduce inequalities in wealth and incomes is not much a matter of guess. It would be very little. And the impatient socialists might question if the Government is very serious about this objective.

The policy of the Government with respect to creation of

employment opportunities is equally desultory. Two brave programmes mentioned in the Budget that would go to alleviate the current misery a little, are the rural works programmes and the programme of urban housing, clearing slums in towns and cities.

While both these programmes have great short-term worth, the Government appears clearly missing the ideal of creating enduring employment opportunities in the industrial sector, both through inducing the expansion of required demand, and incentives to produce the required manufactured goods.

In view of the "green revolution" visiting the country, one would have expected that the industries engaged in food processing would receive adequate help and protection. The Budget has done just the reverse. By making most items in the processed food group expensive, the slowly rising demand for these products would be checked. And, not to speak of expansion of these industries, even the existing units might shrink.

In addition, the Finance Minister scarcely realizes that it is only the food processing industries that allow the current agricultural production to go around widely, stop wastage of food products, and would ultimately sustain the "green revolution".

(Continued on page 31)



The author, an economic commentator, is a regular contributor to periodical journals

The new Industrial Policy recently announced by the Government of India, has become a subject of intense debate in the country. What does it aim at? One view, "New Industrial Policy. A Critique" by M.D. Nalapat, was published in Mainstream of February 28, 1970. Another is given below. Further contributions on the subject are welcome.

Capitalism by Instalment

S.N. MACHAT

WHAT has the new industrial policy done to the Indian economy? The answer is: it has enlarged the area of capitalism. Let there be no doubt on this. Smt Gandhi may continue to talk of socialism, but I am afraid she will lead the country to rampant capitalism. The political exigencies are inexorable.

It is time we re-examined the historical process of capitalist growth in the country in terms of the political expediences of the ruling party. The Old Congress gave the country the first instalment of capitalism; the New Congress is likely to give a larger one.

First Task

Freedom is not an unmixed blessing for all. The reactions to it are mixed. Our freedom movement had two main wings: of those based on landed interests, and of those on industry and commerce. Others were not significant groups. The landed interests were on the defensive; their main concern was to protect their holdings. The industrial and commercial groups were on the offensive, they wanted to expand their interests.

Thus, the first task of the rulers after Independence was to make a show of attack on the landed interests (abolition of zamindari), and advance the interests of the industrial and

commercial groups. The zamindars were given liberal compensation. The effect was to strengthen capitalism, for they invested the money in industry. In this way, the Congress secured the support of the zamindars who continued to it for further benefits. The tenurial system remained undisturbed.

At the same time, the released land was made available to a new class of landed gentry in order to strengthen the political roots of the Congress in the countryside. This was the most important task which the Congress faced in order to win the elections. The First Five-Year Plan with its emphasis on agriculture, community development and assistance to cottage industries, buttressed the position of the Congress in the countryside. As a result, today we have a powerful lobby of the rich peasants in Parliament. It is a potential ally of the capitalist class, for they are the future investors in industry and commerce. They have a stake in capitalism.

The huge public spending during the Second and Third Plans, the scarcity of all products, the liberal credit policy of banks for both speculation and investment, the Government loans, with additional benefits for new industries—all these gave a tremendous boost to capitalist growth, particularly to Big Business.

While all the banks were

controlled by Big Business, the only instrument available with the Government to prevent indiscriminate growth of capitalism was the licensing system. We know now that this system was distorted to the advantage of the Big Business houses. And the liberal import policy till 1958 enriched the commercial class.

In turn, the Big Business distorted the political process in the country by patronizing politicians. The political process was thus corrupted by the money-bags. A monopoly lobby emerged in Parliament. It became a Trojan horse for the ultimate seizure of power by the powerful economic group.

Of course, the Congress could not forget the clamour of the men in its own fold for rewards. That is where the cooperative and small-scale sectors played a part. The cooperatives, khadi development, cottage industries—these became lucrative sources of income for the politicians at the village and district levels.

Colonial Bureaucracy

While this discredited the co-operative movement in the country, it helped to create a new-rich political class in the countryside, who helped to strengthen the political hold of the Congress in the countryside. The large industrial houses, in the meantime, took care of the needs of the Congress at the national level.

The retention of the colonial bureaucracy was another factor which contributed to the strengthening of capitalism in the country. It was inevitable, for, the Congress drew in its ranks men from the same strata. By its origin and inclination, the bureaucracy opposed socialism. Today its ranks are swelled by the growth of Government activities. It is a well-known fact that the bureaucracy is an effective weapon in the hands of those who are opposed to socialism. Its stalwarts join the ranks of the Swatantra and Jana Sangh parties.

Thus, the Congress was able to put its political base on a strong foundation with a liberal distribution of incentives among the top crust of society. But the

political and economic processes inexorably brought to the surface the incipient discontents of the people. The Second and Third Plans sought to achieve substantial growth in the public sector and in employment to placate those rising in revolt

But anyone who has studied the working of the mixed economy of Britain knows that the public sector is not an instrument for socialism. It is quietly made to serve the private sector. The private sector is interested in the development of infrastructure to help its own growth. This, too, is done at the expense of the public.

No Qualms

While costs in the public sector projects mount through the natural growth of prices, they are not allowed to raise prices of their products because the private sector consumers are opposed to any rise in the price of public sector products. Power, steel, raw materials—are all sold by the public sector to the private sector at uneconomical prices. There is tremendous opposition when rail freights are raised or steel prices are revised.

But the private sector has no such qualms at all to raise the prices of its own products. And worse, the politician, who is supposed to guard the public interests, joins the chorus of the private sector against the

economical operation of the public sector projects. Obviously, the understanding of an average Indian politician on economic matters is almost nothing. They talk of losses in public sector projects when they ought to know the elementary economic truth that all expenditures of public sector projects are going out as factor costs—as wages, cost of materials and interests and other levies.

If a public sector project employs more people than is necessary, it is not a loss to the nation. If it spends more money on non-plant constructions, it is not a waste, unless they are ostentatious. In short, our thinking on this subject is heavily influenced by capitalism and its theories. And we refuse to concede that the public sector should charge an economic price for its survival. Here is where the hidden persuaders operate and sabotage the public sector and thus help the private sector.

New Alignment

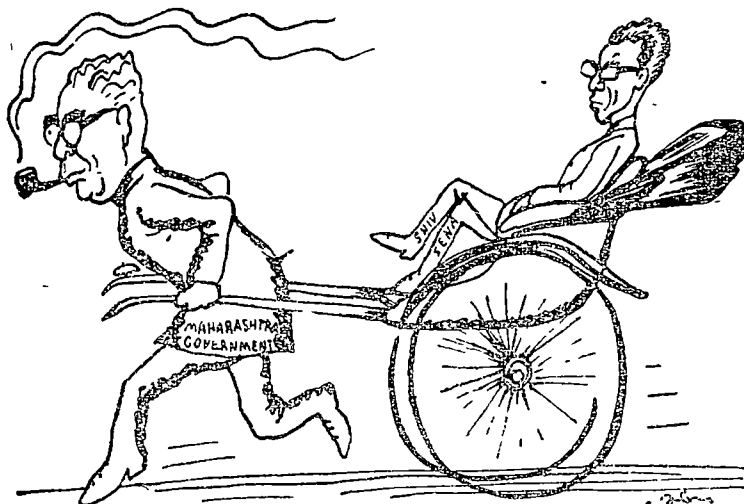
While this mulcting of the public sector by the private sector is going on, the poor of the country were being kept on the leash. They were told that miracles were not wrought overnight and that they should have patience. Obviously, this did not satisfy them. Their discontent grew. This, in turn, frightened the top dogs. They de-

manded a more rapid growth of capitalism and a plan holiday. They also wanted the import of large-scale foreign capital to augment their own strength. All these were conceded. The result was the disaster of the Congress at the last elections.

A new political alignment became necessary for survival. But there arose differences on the nature of this re-alignment. Those who were openly for capitalism wanted the Congress to align with the Right-wing forces. But those who were in favour of a gradual transition to capitalism wanted to create a new political base for themselves in order to survive. Obviously it had to be a broader base with a wider appeal. Hence the radical posture and talk of socialism of the New Congress.

But to create a new political base for a party is no easy task. It is necessary to repeat the entire process by which the Congress established itself in the country. New classes of supporters have to be created both in the towns and the countryside. It is necessary to have resources. One must get control of the credit institutions. It was this which led to the nationalisation of the banks. Having secured the credit resources, it is now planned to distribute credits in a way to foster the rapid growth of a new rich peasantry,

(Continued on page 31)



Courtesy
INDIAN EXPRESS

Whose Baby is Shiv Sena?

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Shiv Sena has bared its fangs once again. This time, it is bracing itself for the 1972 General Election. The Bombay Bandh called by it on March 2, to press the Government to solve the Mysore-Maharashtra border dispute early, was an attempt to refurbish its image well in time for it.

Its militant attitude on the Mysore-Maharashtra border dispute and its insistence that Belgaum and other Marathi-speaking areas must come to Maharashtra, are all designed to ensure its popularity with various sections of the people where its credo has yet found no roots

Distinctly Communal

The present stance and militancy of the Shiv Sena is, however, far more consequential to the extent that it is distinctly communal. Of late, the organisation has shown undue interest in old dilapidated temples in disuse or in dispute, to provoke trouble with Muslims in the neighbourhood.

Early in January, Sri Bal Thackeray, the Shiv Sena Pramukh, made much of the right of Hindus in and around Kalyan to worship at a temple in disuse. Tension flared up in the area, but the adroit handling of the situation by the authorities prevented trouble.

Later, Thackeray shifted his attention to another temple near Thana on similar grounds. The smouldering discontent over the issue erupted on February 22, when a truckload of Shiv Sena supporters were involved in a clash with the Muslims of Kausa, five miles from Thana.

Nine men were injured in the clash, some in the police firing that followed. The trouble started when the Shiv Sena men in the truck—which, incidentally, carried no permit from the Regional Transport Authority to carry so many persons in an open vehicle—attacked a bullock cart, which they alleged, did not leave enough room on the road for them to pass. The men in the truck soon went on a rampage, burning four houses, a petrol pump and some shops.

The truck was proceeding to Mahad, 100 miles from Bombay for a rally to be addressed by Thackeray. Following protests and agitation by the Leftist parties, inquiries initiated by the police have not made much headway. Shiv Sena men involved in the incident have gone on record as saying that they were attacked by people in the locality and that stones were thrown at them.

Armed Men

All this is not, however, sufficient to explain the fact that the men in the truck were armed with lathis and swords, for which, like plying the truck with passengers, they carried no permit.

At Mahad also, there has been enough trouble. Shiv Sena volunteers had singled out Sri S. B. Sawant, Congress MLA, for an attack. Supporters of Sawant gathered to throw a human wall around his house. In the minor fracas that followed, some supporters of Sawant were hauled up by the police. No Shiv Sena man has as yet been charged with any offence.

Thackeray's anti-Muslim bias has been a subject of discussion both in the Assembly and the State-level National Integration Committee. The Chief Minister, Sri V.P. Naik, told the Assembly and the Committee that he had not seen the alleged objectionable writings of Thackeray in his *Marmik* weekly. When pressed by members, he said they would be examined.

Thackeray's call for a Bombay Bandh on March 2, was a clever move to demonstrate his militancy. People of Bombay, already cowed down by the happenings of February 1969 when a similar demonstration by the Shiv Sena on the border issue touched off a four-day riot of an unprecedented magnitude, during which even the minimum protection by the State a citizen could expect was not forthcoming, were benumbed with fear.

Authority Abdicated

With no evidence of the Government's assurances of protection, even to curb coercion by Shiv Sena volunteers, the people, political parties and trade unions merely acquiesced in the hartal. No attempt was made by any section of the people, much less by some political parties and trade unions which had openly opposed the bandh, to disregard the appeals, often laced with threats, held out by Shiv Sainiks to the people to abstain from work.

Most factories, engineering establishments and textile mills worked on Sunday and declared a holiday on Monday (March 2). The Railways ran a skeleton service on the suburban line while the station masters and ticket collectors abdicated their authority and supervision to Shiv Sena volunteers who barred the gates of almost all the suburban railway stations.

The municipalised bus service also gave in to the picketers by withdrawing its few wire-meshed buses that had been on the road in the morning.

Shiv Sena men in cars flying the Red Cross flags, went about enforcing the bandh right under the nose of the police.

The State Government deployed large contingents of the Reserve Police throughout the city and suburbs. Beyond the show of force there was no attempt to beat the bandh or break it.

Thackeray, like most other Opposition parties in the State, is aware that a solution to the Mysore-Maharashtra border dispute lies in the Mahajan Commission report, in the ultimate analysis. The only point to be decided is to what extent these parties could wrest concessions from the Union Government.

Opposition leaders, including those from the PSP, SSP and the Communist Parties, had advised Chief Minister Naik at an informal consultation he had with them, to press the Prime Minister for concessions for the State, but not to stretch them to the breaking point. Their argument was that with the political affiliations such as they are in Maharashtra and Mysore, this is the most opportune time to get a verdict in favour of Maharashtra.

Opposition Stands

But, as national political parties they could not be expected to concern themselves with the same intensity as now for long with the border dispute, which is a purely regional issue. They had also to ensure that purely regional parties did not continue to make political capital out of such minor issues. After all, national parties had to content with far graver issues of national import and they should be free to devote greater attention to them.

Ultimately, it is a safe bet that if the border dispute is not settled soon, the Shiv Sena would find as its partner in the struggle for Marathi-speaking areas of Mysore, the Peasants and Workers Party which, for all its insistence on Marxism, has degenerated into a purely parochial, regional organisation, befuddled in its ideological outlook.

Indirectly, the Shiv Sena will find support from the S. K. Patil-dominated Bombay Pradesh Congress Committee, now out to embarrass the Chief Minister by any means. The BPCC Secretaries in a recent statement,

while affirming support to Naik in his efforts to solve the problem, have warned that should he fail to secure Belgaum for Maharashtra, they would precipitate a constitutional crisis in the State Assembly.

Dr T.R. Naravane, a former Minister in the Bombay Government and prospective leader of the organisational Congress block in the State Assembly, and Sri Mahesh Thakur, a nephew of S. K. Patil, have taken a militant stand on the issue in a sudden spurt of interest in far-off Belgaum and the outlying areas adjoining the Mysore border.

Controversial Suggestion

In a spate of confabulations, discussions, statements and counter-statement on the border dispute, it is interesting to recall that the currently most controversial solution suggested—the division of Belgaum—was first mooted by the President of the Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee, Sri Vasantdada Patil. He offered this suggestion to the Prime Minister on her first visit to Bombay soon after taking office.

When the high-level delegation from Maharashtra including Vasantdada Patil, V. P. Naik and others called on the Prime Minister in New Delhi in February, inspired reports made it appear that the author of the "mischievous" plan for division of Belgaum was Sri R. K. Khadilkar, who is not precisely very close to Sri Y. B. Chavan or the MPCC leadership. Political convenience can ensure a convenient scapegoat in Khadilkar.

It is apparent that in all the odd postures and stances struck by the Shiv Sena and almost all political parties in Maharashtra over the border dispute, the primary concern is with the next General Election.

The Shiv Sena plans to contest almost all the Lok Sabha and State Assembly seats from Greater Bombay. The Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti, a conglomeration of disparate ideological groupings brought together on the convenient platform of striving

for a unilingual Maharashtra State, which annexed a majority of the seats in Greater Bombay in 1957, is in shambles. The PSP, the SSP, and the two Communist Parties are all individually of not much consequence in Bombay. The Congress still has an edge over all the other parties.

The Shiv Sena's emergence on the election front will clearly embarrass all these political parties. The party's alliance with the PSP in the Bombay Municipal Corporation has come to an end after two years.

The Shiv Sena will, no doubt, offer considerable discomfiture to all other candidates in the predominantly Maharashtrian constituencies in Greater Bombay. These account for more than half the 22 Assembly constituencies and five Lok Sabha seats. In the highly cosmopolitan constituencies the Syndicate Congress boasts that it would continue to hold sway.

The Shiv Sena has even selected its candidates for various Assembly and Parliament seats from Bombay. Its choice for the Central Bombay seat, now held by Sri S. A. Dange, is a keyman in the Bajaj organisation.

The Shiv Sena played a key role in the two elections from the North Bombay constituency, where it helped defeat Sri V. K. Krishna Menon in 1967. Its support then was all for the S. K. Patil-dominated BPCC.

While the present BPCC(O) may be content with the few cosmopolitan constituencies in the city, will the MPCC strike a bargain with the Shiv Sena for the predominantly Maharashtrian constituencies, where the Shiv Sena demonstrated its strength in the elections to the Bombay Municipal Corporation?

Whose baby is the Shiv Sena now?

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Structural Changes for Nationalised Banks

S. C. SRIVASTAVA and BANI CHATTERJI

THE nationalisation of the fourteen major commercial banks has invested the national economy with significant elements of built-in economic levers for the emergence of a new economy. The volume of deposits brought within the fold of public ownership can be a potential force. The standing of the nationalised banks can be judged from the volume of deposits with them and advances made by them (see Table)

DEPOSITS AND ADVANCES OF THE
14 SCHEDULED COMMERCIAL BANKS
(At Year-End 1968)
(in Rs crores)

Names	Deposits	Advances
1 Central Bank of India	433 27	296 27
2 Bank of India	394 97	253 05
3 Punjab National Bank	355.96	209 40
4 Bank of Baroda	318 80	196 14
5 United Commercial Bank	240 58	144 60
6 Canara Bank	146 44	96 72
7 United Bank of India	143 89	99.61
8 Dena Bank	121 88	74 08
9 Union Bank of India	115 22	68 63
10 Allahabad Bank	112 72	69.93
11 Syndicate Bank	112.72	70 61
12 Indian Overseas Bank	93 22	58 32
13 Indian Bank	84 59	57 16
14 Bank of Maharashtra	73 02	49 74
Total	2,742.28	1,743.66

At the end of March 1968, the deposits with the scheduled commercial banks stood at Rs 3,856 crores, and at the end of March 1969, at Rs 4,338 crores, which indicate the trend of the increase in bank deposits. With the nationalisation of 14 major commercial banks and the State Bank of India, the state is now in absolute control over 85 per cent of the bank deposits in the country, and it may assure a flow of resources for accelerating the pace of development in the country. The non-nationalised Indian banking sector is now left with only about seven per cent of the total volume of bank deposits. The foreign banks have control over 11 per cent of bank deposits of which the three major banks, namely, the

National and Grindlays Bank, First National City Bank and Chartered Bank hold over 73 per cent of deposits. Command over a sizable portion of the bank funds is a great built-in force in the national economy.¹

It has been argued that "Banks have been nationalised in France and Italy. But very 'little change' in the economic situation of these countries has been made by the measures. It is idle to expect that nationalisation by itself will make any significant change in India. On the other hand, it will only lead to some deterioration because our administrative apparatus is far less efficient than it has been in France and Italy."²

But this is erroneous thinking where the distinction of approach between a developed country and an under-developed country has been blurred. A developed country brings about public ownership fully or partially in a vital sector of the economy with a view to secure more power in the hands of the Government, while an under-developed economy follows the nationalisation policy to generate new impetus to the expanding economy for an even development without prejudice to any single sector.³

All the same, nationalisation of banks is replete with issues and problems which require careful handling in order to get the desired result.

Issues and Problems

Nationalisation of a private enterprise with divergent ownership and far-flung operations entails a number of problems. The most crucial of them is the problem of unification and introduction of an appropriate form of organisation. Which of the alternatives will be a better course: merger of all nationalised banks into one-unit, or an apex corporation with existing units under its administrative control or creating new units with functional integration? All this calls for serious thinking. Whatever form of organisation and management for the nationalised banks is chosen they must ensure autonomy and business flexibility, internal and external economies, and minimum staff functions. The element of

¹D S. Ganguly, "Nationalisation of Fourteen Commercial Banks - Some Issues Considered," *Lok Udyog*, September 1969, pp 613-14.

²H.V.R. Iyengar's view in the *Financial Express*; July 20, 1969

³D.S. Ganguly, *op cit.*; pp 614-17.

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competition, which is an essential factor in the efficient operation of the Banks, should be maintained amongst the nationalised banks.⁴ In India, there is a clear case for retaining banking competition. Indian monetary system is still under-developed and there is less economy in the use of cash. The currency portion of the total demand for money in India is high, compared to that of other nations. This entails a higher social cost in maintenance of the currency system. It is this high proportion of currency that can be cut down by encouraging banking competition.⁵ The retention of competitive banking in a nationalised set up is not a new proposition. France nationalised five big banks, but the individuality and competitive spirit of these were retained.

It is because of this consideration and also for causing the least possible dislocation in the working of the banks and avoiding inconvenience to the public, that the Government has decided to retain the separate identity and the present management of each bank. But the preservation of separate entities would raise many problems in due course. The acquisition of the banks has provided a unique opportunity to reorganise the banking structure and to eliminate waste by way of duplication of banking facilities which would release banking personnel and resources for expanding the banking net work.

A monolithic corporation like the Life Insurance Corporation of India would ill-suit and ill-serve the commercial banking system with the peculiar nature of its business and functions. The Administrative Reforms Commission has not favoured it either.

Grip of Shareholders

The Administrative Reforms Commission has suggested "Sector Corporation" for the administrative control of like enterprises, now functioning under different names or similar enterprises that may be created in future. This is in conformity with the Italian type Apex Corporation, such as the Istituto Per la Ricostruzione Industriale or the Entenazionale Iudrocarburi, that have a number of enterprises of similar nature under their control and supervision. Here the Apex Corporation is a public corporation, whereas the sub-holding and subsidiary companies under its administrative control are, however, in the form of joint-stock companies.

The nationalisation of banking in India has clearly freed the institution from the grip of private shareholders. Hence, the Italian form as such would not be applicable in this case. In UK, the nationalised iron and steel industry provides another form of organisation which is akin to the Italian type, with the existing operating units retaining their identity, but the Iron and Steel Corporation maintains overall administrative control. This provides for continuity of existing management at a unit level with a controlling administrative body at the top.

⁴ *Credit Policy—Guidelines for Government Banks*, October 1969.

⁵ J. K. Alexander, "A case for Competitive Efficiency in the Nationalised Banks," *AICC Economic Review*, November 1, 1969.

This arrangement has been criticised as "half nationalisation". It is admitted on all hands that nationalisation must provide a new look and this can not materialise if the continuity of the existing structure is allowed. It would therefore, be appropriate to evolve a structure which would be a via media between a monolithic organisation, on the one hand, and the preservation of the banks as independent units, on the other. A functional pattern of bank organisation would be suitable for meeting adequately the special needs of export and import business, small industries, agriculture and agro-based industries.

Five Zonal Banks

Certain potential benefits accrue from the size of a bank and there is a natural tendency for it to expand as the economy develops and as the demand for more sophisticated banking services becomes urgent. It is, therefore, worth considering whether to form a few big banking units out of these nationalised banks, which would be more or less equal in size with the State Bank of India. These optimum units, instead of eliminating competition, would intensify it.

We would, thus, suggest that out of these 14 banks, five Zonal Banks called "lead banks"⁶—eastern, western, southern, northern and central—should be created which would cater to the needs of the respective zones or regions. Specific districts should be allotted to banks and the concerned bank should take the lead in surveying the potential for banking development, extending branch offices and expanding credit facilities in the districts of their respective zones or regions. One advantage of creating such banks would be that they would eliminate inter-state rivalry from interfering with the administration of the banks. For the commercial banking sector, an apex State bank may be set up. Such an apex bank for the State may be entrusted with the task of looking after the credit needs of the State projects, sale of State lottery tickets, and coordination of other commercial banks.

Apart from such State banks, there is need for specialised banks like savings banks on the pattern of commercial savings banks of Germany. Saving banks may be organised not only for mobilising deposits but also for extending credit to the lower and middle income groups for housing, education, purchase of equipment, furniture, etc. These banks should also meet the credit needs of the retailers. Further, there is also a need for an export-import bank by amalgamating the foreign offices of the nationalised banks. Such a bank should effectively compete with the foreign banks which have not been nationalised.

One of the difficult tasks is to bring about all the units under a unified administrative control. This involves having a joint banking cadre for the heterogeneous institutions. This is exemplified by the initial difficulties faced by the Life Insurance Corporation and the Air Corporations. Serious dislocations in the existing structure of management

⁶ The Reserve Bank of India has formulated a scheme of lead banks.

hierarchy and personnel employed in it may cause more harm than good. But, at the same time, wholesome methods of management need to be introduced to catch up with the objective that the nationalised banking sector would subserve. This involves redistribution of functions, appropriate placement of personnel, determination of cadre and standardisation of pay scales of employees, together with conditions of service and principles of seniority and promotion and method for inter-unit cross-mobility. As there already exists the biggest national commercial bank, the State Bank of India, it may smoothen the issue if the standardisation of pay scales and terms of services of the newly nationalised banking sector is comparable to that of the State Bank of India.

Uniform Service Conditions

Difficulties might, however, arise in case of personnel drawing high salaries and perquisites which are not correlated to their ability and experience, and where personal predilections played a greater role than the merit of the incumbent in the appointment. Be that as it may, the determination of uniformity and standardisation of terms and conditions of service is a concomitant issue of nationalisation of the private sector and a judicious approach is required. It is a happy augury that the Reserve Bank of India has asked the nationalised banks to seek its prior permission with regard to appointment and extension of service of senior executives.⁷

Placement of appropriate staff in various wings of the bank would call for prudence and staff mobility would be a healthy process. The experienced officials of the State Bank of India who are already acclimatised to public sector banking should be placed in different integrated units of banking to help in orientation of the existing staff to the new socialist norms of banking operations.

Public sector in India suffers from poor performance and other ills, and it is largely attributed to the absence of sense of involvement of the personnel at all levels. It is pertinent to recall the Prime Minister's exhortation to the heads of public undertakings to develop a "feeling of involvement in the policy of the Government". This is of prime importance. It would be appropriate to cite the example of the Tennessee Valley Authority. The TVA Act itself provides for appointment of only those persons in the TVA who subscribe the objectives of the Tennessee Valley Authority.⁸ Indeed, the sense of belonging and involvement of personnel is the crux of the problem and *sine qua non* of success. There must be an educative process to inculcate this vital consciousness in the personnel at all levels if the public sector is really to make a spectacular advance.

Also, the bureaucratic attitudes and the old habit of playing safe have to be changed.⁹ The banking staff today is worried whether giving loans to smaller industrialists, shops, etc., would end in failure of such advances resulting in marring their chances of

promotion and advancement in professional careers. While there is abundant enthusiasm at the senior levels, that enthusiasm has not percolated to the level of the branch agents who consider any extra work a nuisance. What is, therefore, required is a change in the basic attitude, outlook and approach of managerial personnel of banks, particularly at the branch level to make any credit scheme effective.

It must be emphasised that responsibility must be backed by power in the defined areas of functioning with a view to exercising an effective control over administrative machinery. Commercial prudence in the public sector banking can, indeed, lead to the realisation of objectives of nationalisation of bank by inculcating a sense of involvement. The Government must avoid too legalistic regulations and procedure-bound functioning. Another vital matter that should be kept in mind by the authorities is that the avenues and opportunities to develop and go higher up in the echelons of management must be provided to the personnel. "The best men in every profession including management are motivated by a sense of achievement rather than by money. The individual who places exclusive emphasis on his pay is at least disqualified for this reason. But the best man in the world may be defeated if he is not given the proper chance."¹⁰

Norms for Working

There must be a radical revision in the policy of the banking sector as suggested by the Prime Minister. She has emphasised reorientation of policy on the following lines. (i) The banks' additional investment of five per cent of their deposits in Government Securities is necessary in order to step up the outlay on minor electricity programmes. (ii) The public sector should have more access to bank finance. (iii) The bank credit needs for agricultural production should be adequately provided for. (iv) Credit should be extended to small industries and export trade adequately. (v) Use of bank credit for speculative purposes should be stopped. (vi) Bank fund should not be allowed to create monopolies.¹¹

The existing pattern of sectoral distribution of credit is heavily weighted in favour of large-scale industry, wholesale trade and commerce, rather than agriculture, small industries, retail trade and small borrowers. Agriculture which contributes more than 50 per cent of the national income, gets 2.1 per cent of the bank credit, whereas industry, which contributes less than one-fifth of the national income, appropriates nearly two-thirds of the bank credit. More than four-fifths of the scheduled commercial bank credits goes to industry and commerce which account for roughly one-third of the national income.

Although there has been a slight increase in advances to non-conventional borrowers from the agricultural and small industry sectors

⁷The Economic Times, January 24, 1970, p. 1

⁸Section 2 of the TVA Act

⁹"Nationalisation of Banks—Would it be a Failure", Editorial, Financial Observer, August/September 1, 1969; p. 3.

¹⁰J. K. Galbraith, Industrial Organisation and Development, 1959; pp. 4-5

¹¹Text of the broadcast of the Prime Minister on July 19, 1969, announcing the nationalisation of 14 major scheduled banks, Commerce, July 26, 1969.

under the scheme of social control introduced towards the fag end of 1967, the pattern of bank advances has generally remained unchanged.¹² Again, loaning policies of the banks are largely security-oriented, 86 per cent of the scheduled commercial bank advances were against tangible security as late as in May 1969.¹³ It must, however, be admitted that during the last two years there has been a conspicuous increase in advances to the priority section.¹⁴

The new credit policy should, therefore, do away with excessive preoccupation with considerations of tangible security. Financing of non-conventional borrowers in the agricultural and small-scale sectors involves a shift from traditional concepts of credit-worthiness to a loaning system based on technical feasibility, economic viability and projected repayment capacity of the borrowers.

New Loaning System

It is a happy augury that at a joint meeting of the nationalised banks and the fertiliser industry, held in Madras recently, a liberalised loan facility to the farming sector was announced. Under it short-term production loans up to Rs 5,000 or Rs 10,000 would be advanced to farmers, both big and small, without demanding any tangible security other than hypothecation of the standing crop. For larger production loans exceeding Rs 5,000 or Rs 10,000 additional collateral security by way of mortgage of lands, houses, shares or insurance policies would be called for.

On behalf of one of the nationalised banks, it was also announced that its agents had been given discretionary power to allow clean production loans up to Rs 1,500 per farmer. The loan would be extended for the duration of the crop and the due date would be fixed in a way that the loan become payable immediately after the harvest of the crop.

The State Bank of India has taken the lead in offering all types of loans to agriculturists, short-term and long-term. The loans will cover the entire gamut of agricultural operations like land reclamation, sinking of wells and supply of agricultural inputs.¹⁵ Some banks, such as the United Commercial Bank, the Dena Bank and the Canara Bank, have decided to render financial assistance to weavers, blacksmiths, carpenters and furniture-makers, tailors with cloth shops, self-employed technicians, doctors, chartered accountants, lawyers, small businessmen and retailers, transport operators, taxi-owners and rickshawwalas, fishermen, small agriculturists, dairy farms, vegetable dealers, fruit shops, etc. In order to assist the young people who have good academic backgrounds but who are unable to pursue specialised or higher studies for want of funds, the banks will grant loans for higher studies both abroad as well as in India.

Thus, the attitude of the banks to various ad-

vances has undergone a change after nationalisation of banks. Admittedly, there is need to provide credit facilities to these sectors. However, it would be unwise to offer credit to them in a haphazard manner. The credit needs, the production potential and repaying capacity of the borrower should be the main consideration in granting credit, and the individual banks should have the maximum latitude in this regard. Before credit can be increased to the priority sectors, it is necessary to have a proper quantitative assessment of the credit needs of the different segments of the economy. The task of assessing the credit needs of that region and the responsibility of meeting such needs should be mainly the concern of that bank. The National credit Council should assemble these data and on the basis of availability of resources with the banking system, fix targets of credit for different sectors.

It would, therefore, be in fitness of things if we establish a National Guarantee Fund along the lines of the one in existence in Japan. The Japanese Fund guarantees credit for industry only. The one to be operated in India, can be extended to cover the farmers and other vulnerable sections of the economy. The lead bank should, in its turn, earmark certain proportion of deposits mobilised in rural areas for local deployment. The average credit deposit ratio of 70 per cent may be taken as the guiding norm.¹⁶

Bank deposits which worked out to Rs 80-85 per capita in this country is the lowest as compared to other industrially developing or developed countries. In India, hardly 17 per cent of our Gross National Product is banked at present, while in the case of Japan, it is 35 per cent. The percentage ought to be improved during Fourth Plan, if we have to harness this potent source of investment capital.

While the present deposits of Rs 42,000 crores with our banking system ought to be augmented, it may be observed that the spread of banking habit helps frozen currency to become productive. Banks increase the velocity of money which augments investment capital without any increase in money supply in a country. In India, the velocity of money is virtually equal to unity. The new branch expansion drive would help to spread the banking habit of our people more and more. There is a need for opening three rural branches for one opened in an urban area. The present strength of about 8,000 branches should be raised to 20,000 by the end of the Fourth Plan.

It may be conceded that the opening of rural branches is not a profitable proposition. All the same, the loss incurred by rural branches could be offset to some extent by having a two-tier system of rates of interests on rural and urban lending. A slightly higher rate of interest on urban lendings as compared to those in rural areas may be introduced.¹⁷

The new situation may call for a sort of new relationship and exchange between the nationalised

(Continued on page 36)

¹²S. C. Srivastava, "Credit for Rural Sector", *Mainstream* February 28, 1970, p. 29.

¹³*Ibid*

¹⁴*Ibid*

¹⁵Ashakant, "New Credit Policy for Banks," *The Economic Times*, January 13, 1970, p. 5.

¹⁶Ashakant, *op cit*

¹⁷Manubhai Shah, Credit Policy—Guidelines for Government", *Banker*, October, 1969.

Universalist at Large

G. N. ACHARYA

HE is the tallest stalwart of the Freedom Movement I have met. He is six feet four. That is the first thing that anyone notices about him.

A spare, gaunt body, straight as a ramrod despite his eighty years, topped by a bare, grizzled head; a prominent nose and huge, dark, glistening eyes framed by a scrubby beard—that is Abdul Graffar Khan as he is today.

Clad in old-fashioned, simple homespuns, carrying his small bundle of clothes, he has become a familiar figure in India. For 130 days, from October 1, 1969, he moved up and down the land, often travelling in third class, partaking of the simple fare of his poor friends and admirers, visiting slums, moving about among crowds unmindful of security. He was a VIP with a difference.

Exiled Prophet

An exiled prophet, permitted a brief visit to his old haunts, he has been speaking to us, urging, pleading, chiding, appealing, his eyes sparkling with passion, his gentle voice charged with a sense of urgency. He wants no wealth, no position, no office, no title, no social preferment; no, not even the paltry vote that everyone, everywhere seems to be seeking from every platform.

People have been flocking to his meetings more because he seems to be a strange figure walking out of the pages of history. They want to see him more because of some tales of long ago, tales they have heard of blood and valour, of grim oppression matched by noble determination. They want to hear him more out of curiosity

than out of any earnest interest in what he is saying.

Curiosity is justified; so is the praise that is sought to be showered on him. But he is unique in resisting curiosity and repelling praise. He does not like even the customary tribute of flower garlands. He is sane. He is serene.

He talks of God, of Love, of Non-violence. He wants attention only to his Gospel of the brotherhood of man, of compassion for the poor and the oppressed, of the nobility of selfless service—the same Gospels that his friend and mentor, Mahatma Gandhi, preached till his voice was stilled by three bullets of hate.

This simple austere man, speaking with passionate pleading in his voice, is one of the strangest surprises of history. His life baffles Marxian dialectics. His achievements defy all theories of history. The geography of his home, the environment of his birth, the background of his youth had nothing to indicate or explain the strange miracle of love that he wrought among his once ferocious people.

Enduring Humanity

Persecuted, betrayed, neglected, he has survived misrepresentation and contumely. All hopes shattered, all glory gone, his humanity has endured—a sheer triumph of will and personality against Himalayan barriers of hate and misunderstanding.

His home is “a country of great peaks and deep valleys, of precipitous gorges and rushing grey-green rivers, a barren beautiful country of intense sunlight, clear sparkling air....” Utman-

zai, a village two miles from Charsadda, the tehsil headquarters, is beautifully located on the banks of the gurgling, snow-fed river Swat.

His father, Bahram Khan, was the Khan (head) of Utmanzai. A man of great powers of endurance matched by native intelligence, he died in 1926 at the age of 95. But only seven years earlier, when he was 88, he was happy to be imprisoned by the British, because he was no less a nationalist than his son.

Charsadda is 20 miles from Peshawar, the unchallenged queen of Pathan cities, 12 miles from the mouth of the Khyber pass. By the time of Herodotus, the Greek historian, the Pathans and their city were famous. He speaks of “the most warlike of all the Indians, who lived around the city of Kaspaturus in the country of Paktuik.” Kaspaturus has been definitely identified as the historic city of Peshawar.

Khyber Pass

The Khyber and the other passes piercing the Hindu Kush were the only passages—difficult, formidable, yet passable by strong men and horses—from Central and West Asia into India.

It was through one of these passes that Alexander's Greek armies debouched into the plains of Hindustan. It was through these that the Tartar regiments of Genghis Khan rode down from Central Asia. His Shamaanist hordes came very near to totally destroying the Arabo-Persian civilization carried eastwards by Islam, as the still desolate ruins of Bamyan testify. It was through these that Arab and Turk, Mongol and Pathan came to India. It was the way that Babar came and Akbar, Bahlol Lodi and Timur Shah.

The history of this Frontier then is a story of marching armies, invading or retreating, but always fighting. As Arthur Swinson in his book, *North-West Frontier* says “It has been said, and without too much exaggeration, that every stone in the Khyber has been soaked with the blood of battle the name has

become synonymous with treachery, feuds, and barbaric guerrilla warfare."

The only reputations made in the Frontier were military ones. The most modern figures of that genre are Field Marshals Alexander and Auchinleck. The latter was a Brigadier in the Frontier when Badshah Khan was making an altogether different type of history.

Pathan Character

These facts of history and geography have moulded the character of the Pathan tribes—about 3,000,000 people who inhabit this sprawling territory of 40,000 square miles which once belonged to Afghanistan. After many tortuous and blood-soaked campaigns, it came firmly into British possession by the treaty signed in Kabul with Amir Abdur Rahman on November 13, 1893. The "Durand Line", called after the then Foreign Secretary, Sir Mortimer Durand, continues to be recognised as the international frontier.

The Pathan, however, was scarcely bothered about such high politics. His life revolved round *zar*, *zan* or *zamin*, gold, woman or land. He always carried a rifle. *Badala*, or revenge, was the main principle of his working life, except in so far as it was qualified by *melmastia*, or the law of hospitality.

Even an enemy seeking refuge must be protected against aggressors. Otherwise, "because a man had been slighted in a remote village by the Helmand river another may be murdered in Bombay or London or Paris many years later." Sometimes the vendetta stopped only after every member of a *khel*, or clan, had been killed.

Such was the land in which Ghaffar Khan lived, such the people with whom he worked. The transformation that was wrought was nothing less than a historic miracle. It is unnecessary to deal with the events of Ghaffar Khan's life. These are fully set out in D. G. Tendulkar's classic biography.

Many aspects of his life and work have been discussed in

numerous recent newspaper and magazine articles. I have sketched the social and historical background to highlight the nature of subsequent developments.

The same Pathans wrote one of the most glorious chapters in the history of non-violent political action following the arrest of Abdul Ghaffar Khan on April 22, 1930. The story of the bloody shootings on *Kissa Kahani Bazaar* (the road of the story tellers), the 40-foot wide road, which runs 820 yards from the Kabul Gate to the Sabji Mandi of Peshawar, is fully set out in the report of the Committee headed by Vithalbhai J. Patel, the redoubtable ex-Speaker of the Central Legislative Assembly.

Here I would like to cite a short passage from "the report of Abdul Kasuri, President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee", which, according to Will Durant, "was smuggled through the censorship".

Indomitable Courage

I think this Kasuri is none other than Maulana Abdul Qadir Kasuri who was named one of the members of the Patel Inquiry Committee set up by the Congress Working Committee on May 14. But as the report narrates, Kasuri was arrested on May 27, two days before the Committee was due to meet at Rawalpindi because it was not allowed to enter Peshawar.

Hence, the importance of this extract from a longer piece cited by Durant, in his book *The Case for India* (pp 143-144 of the Indian edition).

"Now the crowd gave a good example of the lesson of non-violence that had been instilled into them. When those in front fell down wounded, those behind came forward with their breasts bared and exposed themselves to the fire ... All the young people stood their ground without getting into panic. A young Sikh boy came and stood in front of a soldier and asked him to fire at him, which the soldier unhesitatingly did, killing him. Scores of such instances will come out on further inquiry.

"This crowd kept standing

at the spot, and were fired at from time to time until there were heaps of dead and dying lying about (The Patel Committee's finding is that at least 125 persons were killed that day.)

"Two facts are noteworthy.... There was not one single instance where there was the mark of a bullet at the back ... Neither the police nor the military nor anybody else alleges that there was any stick or weapon, blunt or sharp, with the persons in the crowd, nor were any wrenched from any person by the authorities ..."

Such was the story of discipline and courage, of the mystery and miracle of the transformation of the Pathan at the seed time of Freedom. Mahatma Gandhi was the prime agent of this transformation. Next only to him, was the role of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. In a sense his task was far more difficult than Gandhiji's. To the men of the plains, non-violence was not altogether a new doctrine, though nobody had put it into practice on a mass scale.

Harrowing Scenes

Webb Miller, in his book *I Found No Peace*, after recounting some of the harrowing scenes at Dharasana, pointed out the extreme difficulty of understanding non-violence. "The Western mind can grasp violence returned by violence, can understand a fight, but is, I found, perplexed and baffled by the sight of men advancing coldly and deliberately and submitting to beating without attempting defence."

Despite the lapse of years and the repeated and successful practice of non-violence in the land of its birth and elsewhere, it is still difficult to understand.

Webb Miller wrote in 1930. Arthur Swinson's book about the Frontier, to which I have referred earlier, was published in 1967. He refers to the incident of the arrest of Abdul Ghaffar Khan on April 22, 1930. As the police lorry in which they were to be moved was surrounded by a crowd, the prisoners "in a

(Continued on page 38)

Conquerors and Saviours of Laos

T. V. KUNHI KRISHNAN

A time bomb that has been ticking away in Laos for the last few years has now exploded. This little, land-locked kingdom (about three-fourth the size of Uttar Pradesh and with a population of 3 million—about the same as that of Delhi) borders six countries—Burma, China, North Vietnam, South Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand. Its geographical position has been the cause of some of its misfortune, but not all.

The existence of many sub-nationalities with no strong national loyalties has been exploited by all those who came into Laos on one pretext or the other, some as conquerors, others as saviours. In the recent warfare in Laos, saviours more than conquerors have played a leading role.

US Intervention

The United States of America, which is acting the role of the "saviour", is spending \$150 million a year to arm, equip, feed, pay, guide strategically and tactically, and often transport into and out of action a 36,000-strong army of irregulars called *Armee Clandestine*.

This force is used to fight the pro-Communist forces which, according to Washington, threatens the Laos Government in Vientiane and endangers the US war efforts in South Vietnam. A staff of 70 American attachés at the US Embassy in Laos and a very large number of American CIA men counsel the guerrilla units of the *Armee*. Two private airlines, Air America and Continental Air Services, with 279 pilots, are under contract in Laos.

The 15-year-old clandestine American commitment in Laos is now the subject of critical scrutiny in the US Senate. C.L. Sulzberger the foreign affairs specialist of the *New York Times*, wrote last month: "Perhaps the most significant American foreign policy failure over the past decade came neither in Vietnam nor at the Bay of Pigs but in Laos." He estimated that during the last decade US aid to Laos totalled \$1.75 billion (Rs 1,312 crores).

Foreign Troops

The extent of the US involvement is still shrouded in mystery. President Nixon has refused to release more than a heavily censored transcript of Government testimony before a US Senate Subcommittee about the strength of American forces, because it would reveal that the US had broken the Geneva Agreement of 1962 on Laos.

The 14-nation Geneva Conference had provided for the withdrawal of all foreign troops and international guarantee of the neutrality of Laos. For many years Laos has been hopelessly divided between Neutralists, Rightists and pro-Communists, and has been at the mercy of Western powers.

The Right-wing forces backed by the US number about 55,000, and the Pathet Lao and the Left-wing Neutralists about 50,000.

When the French withdrew from Laos in 1945, after half a century of occupation, Japanese invaders had helped set up an independent national government which collapsed with the short and unhappy return of the French

in 1946. In 1947, Laos became a constitutional monarchy and two years later an independent sovereign state within the French union.

Dissatisfied with the Government's anti-national policies, dissidents under Prince Souphanaouvong allied themselves with the Vietminh Communists and subsequently formed the Pathet Lao rebel movement. The Pathet Lao invaded Laos in 1953 and threatened the royal capital of Luang Prabang. An agreement of cessation of hostilities was reached at Geneva Conference of 1954.

The agreement provided for the military and political integration of Pathet Lao with the rest of Laos, the withdrawal of foreign forces and the setting up of an International Commission for Supervision and Control (ICC) with India as Chairman and Canada and Poland as members. Pathet Lao was left in possession of the two northern provinces of Phongsaly and Samneua by the 1954 agreement.

After months of negotiations between Prince Souphanaouvong and his half brother, Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma, a national government was formed in 1957. Indeed, until 1957, a chance remained to establish a genuinely neutral Laotian government to balance Western and Communist influences. But Washington sabotaged the arrangement. Only by October 1960 the first Russians in history set foot on Laotian soil. Massive Western, particularly US, influence and interventions had gone on unhampered for many years.

In the elections in 1958, more than half the seats in the Parliament were captured by the Leftist parties. Reactionary forces with the backing of Western powers, formed a Right-wing group which managed to topple in 1960 the national and neutralist Government of Prince Souvanna Phouma, who had to flee from the country.

In 1961 when fighting broke out again, the Soviet and British Governments (co-chairmen of the 1954 Geneva conference) made a joint appeal which led to a fresh cease-fire and the convening in 1961 of a 14-nation conference on Laos in Geneva.

A National Government of all parties including Pathet Lao political wing, was again formed in 1962, and the 14-nation Geneva Conference signed an agreement providing for withdrawal of foreign troops and international guarantee of Laotian neutrality.

Following the assassination of the Left-wing neutralist Foreign Minister, hostilities broke out again and all the Pathet Lao Ministers left the Government and went to the northern province.

Uneasy Peace

An uneasy peace prevailed in Laos till last year, when the US—backed Laotian troops seized the Plain of Jars which had been in Pathet Lao hands since 1964. The Plain of Jars—so called because of the large prehistoric funeral urns that have been found there—is an oval area of about 25 to 35 miles and occupies a strategic place.

In February this year Communist-backed guerrilla forces drove away the Laotian Government forces from the Plain and captured it. The neutralist Prime Minister Prince Souvanna Phouma had earlier proposed that the Plain of Jars be neutralised.

Just before the Communist attack, American aircraft had evacuated almost the entire civilian population of 23,000 so that in the event of Communist occupation, the Plain would become a free bombing zone. US B-52 bombers based in Thailand were used against the invading Communist forces.

They are now being used in massive raids against Communist positions in the Plain. Washington believes that bombing will save the US from having to take the decision to involve US ground forces directly in the war. The US prestige is irrevocably committed in the outcome of the struggle.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Prince Souvanna Phouma early in March 1970 asked Britain and the Soviet Union, the Co-Chairmen, to reconvene the 1962 Geneva Conference and portested to the British and Soviet Governments against the Communist offensive. The Laotian king and

his Foreign Minister expected India to "play its part" as Chairman of the International Control Commission to persuade the two co-chairmen of the Geneva agreements, to take an early initiative to convene an international conference.

India has taken the unrealistic stand that both the United States and North Vietnam are responsible for the present escalation of hostilities. New Delhi has now contacted Canada and Poland, the two other members of the ICC to determine the course of action for bringing about cessation of hostilities. India's initiative is not likely to be fruitful as long as the American clandestine involvement in Laos continues.

The big powers are not likely

to take any notice of the request made by the Laotian Prime Minister for a peace conference until the military situation worsens. The US would be prepared for a third peace conference on Laos only if the Rightist and Neutralist forces are unable to withstand the Communist offensive.

In fact, the US sought the peace agreement in 1962 only because it had lost faith in the ability of the country's pro-Western army to withstand the forces of the pro-Communist Pathet Lao.

The same situation may develop again, and until then innocent men will die lonely deaths on the Plains and in the jungles of Laos.

People's War in Angola

SCHOFIELD CORYELL

AN irresistibly growing liberation struggle in the Portuguese colony of Angola, in Southern Africa, has just celebrated its ninth birthday.

The Angolan resistance turned into an armed fight on February 4, 1961, with the successful attack organized by the MPLA (People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola) on the post-office and prison of the Angolan port and capital, Luanda, resulting in the liberation of a number of political prisoners.

Liberated Zones

That was the Angolan people's "Bastille Day", marking the beginning of a struggle that has been gathering momentum ever since, with one large area after another being freed from Portuguese control.

The first freed zone, after the area immediately surrounding Luanda, was in Cabinda to the

North-West, bordering on the friendly Congo (Brazzaville), where the MPLA established its headquarters after being chased from the other Congo (Kinshasa) by Adoula, under American pressure, in 1964.

In that period, the UPA (Union of Peoples of Angola), a well-publicized rival nationalist group—strongly backed by the United States unofficially—threw a great deal of confusion into the situation and forced the MPLA to divert much of its energy to an internecine struggle. At the time when the MPLA was driven from the Congo (K), the UPA set up its famous "Government in Exile" (GRAE) there under the leadership of Holden Roberto.

Since that time, however, the MPLA has spread its influence everywhere in Angola, and is today the sole liberation group recognised and supported by the Organization of African Unity. Its headquarters are now deep in

freed Angola territory.

The GRAE—now quite generally recognized by Africans as a group manipulated by the United States—has no further real activity in the field. Recently, however, a new splinter groups called UNITA was formed by the former Foreign Affairs Secretary of GRAE but its influence is slight.

Since the liberation of Cabinda, the MPLA has succeeded in establishing its control over areas covering the North-East, the South-East and the Centre, so that about one-third of the entire country is now in the hands of the liberation forces.

"Our military strategy," explained an MPLA spokesman, "is to constantly increase the areas under our control, and so to drive the Portuguese forces further and further to the periphery. We are going to surround them and isolate them in the big cities where alone they will feel relatively safe."

"Then we will attack them in their final lair by urban guerrilla action—this type of action has already begun as evidenced by the recent blowing up of the installations of Petrofina, the Belgian oil firm. Our ultimate aim is to push the colonialists into the sea."

Administrative System

In the liberation zones, the system of administration is based on the idea of genuine grass-roots democracy. The basic cell is the *group*—a small face-to-face unit of about 30 villagers. These groups are linked to a regional *action committee*, to which each group sends a delegate. The *action committees*, in their turn, are linked to a *steering committee*. An *executive committee*, consisting of delegates from the *steering committee*, co-ordinates the activity on a national scale.

"No action is undertaken," explained the spokesman, "until it has been discussed thoroughly with the group members who, after all, will be the ones to carry it out. The ideas about what should and can be done, and the general plans, are the result of constant inter-action between the

base and the leadership, which is nothing more than an emanation of the membership."

The overall scheme—with its democratic character and spirit—seems very similar to the organizational concepts of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam.

The MPLA places great emphasis on education. "We are preparing ourselves for the time when we will be free to govern ourselves," explained the spokesman. "The colonialists deliberately kept our people in ignorance. Ninety-five per cent of the Angolans are illiterate. The other five per cent—known as the *assimilados*, because they have been permitted the privilege of acquiring Portuguese culture and learning—are the chosen few whom the Portuguese have cultivated for their own purposes, with the intention of using them against their own people as instruments of colonial rule."

Outstanding Nationalists

"Yet from among these privileged few," he continued, "have emerged some of the outstanding nationalist leaders like Mario de Andrade and Augustino Netto, President of the MPLA, who deserted the colonialist masters and returned to their people."

They have been instrumental in inaugurating a vast educational programme in the liberated zones. This programme, bringing basic literacy and the rudiments of culture to those who have been deprived of it, has already produced innumerable new cadres drawn from the common people, who are now responsible leaders of the freedom struggle.

The educational programme, according to the MPLA spokesman, is closely linked with the immediate problems of the liberation movement, and tied to the political and military problems of the moment.

"We teach basic literacy to all," he explained. "And along with that we inculcate an understanding of the meaning of our struggle for independence and social progress—the construction of a new country in which all will participate and benefit."

"At a higher level, for the budding cadres of our movement, we have such practical courses as 'The Economic Geography of Angola', 'The Mobilization and Organization of the Masses', as well as courses in Economics and Philosophy."

"We strive—through persuasion and reasoning, without cramming anything down people's throats—to give an overall scientific outlook to our people," he pointed out. "At the Centres for Revolutionary Instruction we are training the future leaders of the revolutionary."

Collective Farms

In the liberated zones, the process continued, "agriculture is going forward without the spread destruction of the livestock caused by the Portuguese armies. Thousands of Angolans who fled at first to the neighbouring Congos, in the face of the Portuguese bombs, have now returned to Angola to work for the revolution and the future under the protection of the People's Army. It is the Portuguese soldiers who now fear to leave their garrisons."

Many of the lands in the liberated zones which previously belonged to the colonialists have now been converted into collective farms where maize and millet is cultivated by the Angolan agricultural workers. But these peasants also have small personal plots of their own. In addition, there are areas reserved for the production of food for the guerrillas.

"The Angolan peasant spends two days a week working on the collective farm, another two days working on his personal plot, and another two days working to produce food for the guerrilla armies."

"The seventh day is a day of rest, and on that day the MPLA organizes cultural and educational events such as popular theatre depicting the problems of everyday life and war. There is also much group singing and dancing to keep the morale high."

"In this process of collective work and education in the liberated zones we are creating a

national sentiment and bringing together people of various dialects and different religions, such as Christians and Animists."

The ruthlessness and perseverance of the Portuguese colonialist army, backed by its NATO allies, is largely explained by both the strategic and purely economic stakes involved in the outcome of the struggle

In the first place, Angola—the oldest colony in the world, since it was first conquered by the Portuguese in the fifteenth century—contains a rare abundance of wealth, such as coffee (the major crop in Africa, and the second in the world), diamonds, and much else.

It is from these resources that the Portuguese, with the aid of their labourers, living in conditions of virtual slavery for the companies of many Western capitalist countries. Thus, Portuguese colonialism stands as watch-dog over a wide variety of foreign investments—British, American, Dutch, Belgian and West German.

Foreign Investors

Among the most powerful foreign corporations with heavy investments in Angola are the German firm of Krupps (iron ore), the Anglo-American Corporation (Diamonds), the Gulf Oil Company (USA), Royal Dutch Shell, etc.

Portugal, the poorest country of Western Europe, could not possibly meet the costs of waging a full-scale colonial war, not only in Angola but also in her other equally rebellious colonies of Guinea and Mozambique, without substantial military and economic backing from her principal NATO allies.

Much of the military hardware supplied to Portugal under the terms of NATO—supposedly for her role in the "joint defence of Europe"—is used against the revolutionaries of Angola. And it is no surprise that among Portugal's main military suppliers are the very countries whose corporations have extensive economic investments in the colony such as the United States, Federal Germany, Great Britain,

Belgium, etc

American military assistance to Portugal is spelt out in a series of "Mutual Defence Treaties" under which Portugal has been receiving regularly, since 1948, great quantities of fighter and transport planes, heavy and light artillery and other firearms, tanks, warships, and much else.

The "Mutual Defence Treaty" also stipulates that "the government of Portugal agrees to facilitate the production and transfer to the Government of the United States of America . . . of raw and semi-processed materials required by the United States . . . which may be available in Portugal or dependent territories under its administration."

In return for its military support to Portugal, and to Portuguese colonialism, the US also gets in addition, the use of the strategically valuable Atlantic island of the Azores to be used as a base

In recent months, faced with the growing threat of the revolutionary movement in Angola, Portugal—in collusion with the white racist regimes like Smith's Rhodesia and South Africa—has been pushing forward an ambitious programme of military and logistic development, building airfields, roads, ports, dams, etc to facilitate the re-conquest and continued exploitation of the colony. The entire white population on the spot has been armed and mobilised for the man-hunt

The seemingly interminable colonial war is now giving rise to increased opposition inside Portugal itself. Every year thousands of draft-age youths flee to France or elsewhere in Europe to escape military service in Africa.

A straw in the wind was the report of an anti-war demonstration (February 24) in Lisbon by hundreds of youths, shouting "Peace in Guinea, Angola and Mozambique" before the police charged and arrested several of the activists.

As the MPLA spokesman put it to me "We are not nationalists in the narrow sense of the term. We recognise that there are freedom-loving forces inside Portugal itself, and regard these forces as our allies."

The Key to the astonishing strength and resiliency of the MPLA—whose headquarters are now established inside Angola itself—are its thoroughly democratic methods and its clearly defined aims of complete political and economic independence

The MPLA—like the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front—is a union of many distinct political groups and tendencies agreed on the objective of cleansing the country of colonialism in every sphere of life and turning it over to its inhabitants.

The MPLA political programme also resembles in many respects the 1967 political programme of the Vietnamese NLF. It does not explicitly spell out a socialist future, but calls for an end to the domination of the country by foreign interests, and points to the development of an independent economy for the benefit of the two most numerous classes of the population: the workers and peasants

Again, like the South Vietnamese NLF, the MPLA manages to maintain good relations with both the great Socialist Powers—People's China and the Soviet Union—without completely aligning itself with either.

Natural Allies

"We get our arms from both the socialist countries—after all, they are our natural allies—as well as from independent Black African States," pointed out the spokesman, "but most of our weapons are captured from the Portuguese soldiers themselves."

Meanwhile, the colonial war rages unabated, as greater and greater numbers of Portuguese soldiers arrive on the scene. Nine years ago, when the armed struggle began, there were 20,000 Portuguese soldiers on duty in the colony, today there are over 80,000—the overwhelming majority of the Portuguese armed forces are now held at bay in Africa.

But, like their Vietnamese comrades half-way around the world, the Angolan partisans are prepared to fight a "protracted war" of indefinite length to achieve a future of freedom without exploitation.

Satyajit Ray—An Appraisal

KIRANMOY RAHA

THE seventeen-day long "Retrospective of Satyajit Ray" films, held recently in Delhi gave one the rare opportunity of seeing his entire work in the order they were made, one after the other. However guarded with critical armour one went to see them, I doubt if any one could withstand the impact or have any doubt that here was an authentic artist of our times.

What are the sources and nature of Satyajit Ray's creative imagination? Has he already given of his best and is now on a downward slope of decline? Or are there reasons to think that the springs of his creative and inventive imagination are still fresh and abounding?

Fifteen Years

The Retrospective covers a period of fifteen years of film making. They form a body of work made up of 19 feature films—counting the three in "Teen Kanya" and two in "Kapurush-O-Mahapurush" separately, one biographical documentary and one short film for TV—a substantial output which would provide enough material to define the outlines of the maker's vision and art.

All the films without exception carry, in greater or less measure, the stamp of Ray's looking at and doing things. But it is not easy to find common denominators in all of them. One has to ask at the outset, what are the sort of authors and stories he has chosen for his feature films?

I find that he has so far chosen two novels by Bibhutī Bhūsan Bandyopadhyaya, one novel each by Narendra Mitra, Saradindu

Banerji, and Sunil Ganguly, four long and short stories by Tagore, two short stories each by Tarasankar Banerji and Raj Sekhar Bose, one long short story by Upendra Kishore Roy Chowdhury and one short story each by Prabhat Mukherji and Premendra Mitra.

Besides, two of the films are based on stories written by him—a perplexing miscellany.

The stories are also of a bewildering variety, from classics of literature to detective fiction and slender pieces. The crowd of characters is equally varied. Obviously, to try to fit in all the films in one set frame of reference is not possible.

But Ray would not be the significant artist he is if the essential features of his world and mind cannot be gathered from what are considered to be his major works.

Commentators and critics, by and large, agree in placing Ray in the mainstream of the Tagorean humanist tradition. He is taken as being primarily an expositor and illuminator of the values of the Tagore world, as a chronicler of the awakening and intellectual ferment in Bengal at the turn of the century and the changes that followed. It is a plausible view point and there is no dearth of material in his films to support it.

Apu growing up and breaking through the confines of a rural shell—the explosion of discovery of a wider world—the train and telegraph poles in "Pather Panchali", the prized possession of the globe atlas and the arrival in Calcutta, in "Aparajito", the wanderlust and realisation in "Apur Sansar"—his thirst

for reading, the primacy he gives to the treasures of the mind.

And, then, in different roles, the acceptance in "Devi", of science and reason to supplant traditional beliefs and superstitions. And again as Bhupati in "Charulata", engaged in the task of making his country wake up and aspire to freedom, and an East-West synthesis.

Side by side, the Ray heroine has been discovering herself and her role in the context of social change. Even as a young girl in a village, the rebellious Mrinmoyee in "Samapti" is grown up compared to the docile and loving Aparna of "Apur Sansar". In "Kanchanjunga", she grasps the opportunity—make believe and formal though it was intended to be—to reject the person her father wanted her to marry. In "Mahanagar", she is conscious of her separate individual identity and her right to earn and, in "Charulata", her right to love.

Humanist Credo

Such then is the world Ray is taken to have created with total conviction and inimitable style. It is the picture of a world imbued with faith, hope and belief in the innate dignity of man—it is, in other words, a restatement in terms of the cinema of the humanist credo.

Seeing the films one after the other, I now wonder if such a view gives the whole picture. There is no doubt that his unemphatic style is ideally suited to depict and explore the boundaries of a particular tradition and an era. But even as he has explored and created, he has left enough evidence of his awareness of the shortcomings and inadequacies of that tradition and that era, and the age following it.

In "Paras Pathar", the fantasy form does not wholly conceal the underlying comment on the cupidity and avarice our society breeds. That it has bred a Paresh Babu in each one of us is amply demonstrated by the fact that the street corners of the towns in India have become selling counters for lottery tickets.

Ray's comment on the upper crust society in "Kanchanjunga" is no less revealing. As elsewhere, his comments are without cynicism or bitterness, but there is no mistaking the view the family is held up to.

The insufferable head of the family, the pretence and meretricious nature of the lives they live, are tellingly contrasted with the candour and confidence of the young boy from a different class. Neither the rarefied atmosphere of Darjeeling nor the glitter of high society is able to bowl him over. He has no illusion about the friendship struck in Darjeeling outlasting the descent to Calcutta.

In "Kapurush", Ray's view of the nature of society and the middle-class Bengali brought up in the spent Tagorean tradition takes on a new edge. It is a decadent society and its typical product is either a coarse Boxwalla or a failure and a coward. The spiritually bankrupt tea garden executive can only think of drink to make life easy and the cowardly hero clings to the box of sleeping pills—a brilliant symbol of escapism and evasion.

There is no moral fibre left in him, no inner resources.

In "Nayak", the statement is more explicit. Society has now found its new god in the tinsel mask of a matinee idol. The alienation of Arindam is the result of a two-way process. The worshipped no less than the worshippers have created it, and in the process the artist is corrupted and commercialised.

It is not for nothing that for the first time the advertising man makes his appearance. Between the two, they provide the perfect symbols of contemporary commercial society.

It is not my point that Satyajit Ray's outlook runs counter to the humanist tradition. My point is that Ray has all along been conscious of some of its inadequacies in coping with the forces latent in society. His humanist faith has not obscured his view of the present-day reality.

But—and here I come to my central question—why is it then that the pervading vulgarity,

coarseness and corruption all around do not find adequate expression in his films? Why is it that he has not really tackled so far themes like violence or evil or strife? No one will surely suggest that the problems posed by these themes are not there in the country.

I am not entirely persuaded by the answer generally given to these questions. The answer given is that the experience that has gone into his making is an experience dominated by the value orders of Tagorean world.

If this were the only explanation, I am unable to account for several things in his work. How to explain some of the images he has selected, how to explain some of the characters? How, again, to explain his choice of the novel "Pratidwandi", as the source story of the film he is now making?

Very tentatively, I would suggest that part at least of the explanation is the limiting factor of the style of his film language.

Satyajit Ray has indeed made films of many moods and styles. But with all their diversity there has been a basic stylistic unity.

Contemplative or humourous they unmistakably bear the stamp of a highly personal director. For all their variations, stylistically the language used has been within recognisable bounds.

And I think that this is now proving a handicap. I also think that Ray is conscious of it and will not easily become its captive. In fact, my belief is that he is now engaged in evolving an altogether different style.

The reason for this belief is his latest film, "Aranyer Din Ratri". Whether the film on the whole is good or bad, there is no mistaking the change. It is more complex, more terse, even laconic and somewhat restless. Look, also at the characters chosen. They are all new types—they do not fit in the typology of earlier Ray films. They are more complicated and wholly urban.

Personally I am not entirely satisfied with the film, but I think that it bears evidence that Ray is developing a style more suited to grapple with contemporary reality. The last film of the Retrospective suggests both the end of one road and the beginning of another.

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CAPITALISM—BY INSTALMENT

(Continued from page 16)

industrialists, commercial classes and cooperators

But these classes are not to be drawn from among the poor. In fact, these classes are already putting pressure on the Government to give them a freer hand and more opportunities

This factor was noted at the annual meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry last year when its President pointed out the need to enlarge the base of his organisation by bringing into its fold the medium and small-scale sectors in order to strengthen its position in the country. Of course, FICCI could not have done this because it had little resources to distribute among these groups, Smt Gandhi and her supporters are capitalising on this scheme.

Today, Smt Gandhi has undertaken the enormous task of repeating the socio-economic changes which established the Congress in power in order that her party can continue to remain in power for a long time. She has called for land reforms so that land will be released for further distribution among a new class of peasantry that is to be built up in the countryside beholden to the New Congress. Adequate compensation will, of course, be given to the big landed gentry so that they too will go over to join the ranks of the New Congress in expectation of further benefits from the government to set up industries.

The call for the nationalisation of old and useless mills, particularly the sugar mills of UP, is another example of winning over the millowners to the side of the party in power by distributing public money through liberal compensation. The fact that the millowners had not only exploited the workers but also the producers for decades, does not appear to have influenced the Government in its approach to the issue of compensation.

Similarly, Smt Gandhi has to bring up a new industrial policy to create a new class of medium and small-scale sector industria-

lists. The declaration of a licence holiday in these sectors is designed to build them up rapidly. Money is to be provided liberally for new ventures in these sectors.

It is also necessary, as a parallel process, to enlarge the cooperative sectors, again to benefit a new class of political agents of the New Congress in the countryside.

However, all these are not steps opposed to the growth of Big Business. It is to be placated by various benefits. It has been decided to enlarge the area of Big Business operation. It has been offered a "joint sector" and easy credits. Thus the bank nationalisation is not going to affect the Big Business. In any case, it has reached a stage now when it has large reserve funds for day-to-day operations and investment, and what it wants by way of heavy investments will be taken

care of by the Government. Thus the political necessities of the New Congress compel it to build up its political infrastructure throughout the country on a new base—a middle group in land, industry, commerce and cooperation. This will be the second instalment of capitalism.

What people tend to ignore is the fact that today's middle group industrialist is tomorrow's tycoon, and a Swatantrite the day after. Only the myopic would believe that we are marching towards socialism.

In fact, I see that in another ten years we might have rampant capitalism in this country. Of course, the public sector will be there. It has served a useful purpose for the private sector and will serve it in the future, too. It is like the private banks which collect public savings for private investment. The public sector will collect public money and provide a permanent subsidy to the private sector.

NO TOUCH OF MODERNITY (Continued from page 14)

Employment opportunities generated in the food processing industries would be of the enduring nature. More or less of it compared to that in the rural works programme does not make any sensible comparison. A disincentive to food processing industry is a direct hit to a change over to modernity.

If transportation is civilization, the framers of our Budget hardly realize it. The Railway budget was badly conceived in so far as it had put up the freights and fares without relevance to the rise of productivity in the economy. And now, the new imposts on petrol is another wrong step.

Enhanced duty on petrol does not hit the car owners alone, it hits much more severely those who depend upon public transport. Any one familiar with commuters' problems in a city like Delhi would endorse that those cycling more than 30 kilometers a day deserve immediate help to change over to public buses or shuttle trains. And, this the Finance Minister has not desired. A deduction of

Rs 20 in the income-tax return in lieu of transport is after all not such a relief.

For the first time the Central Budget has shown concern about the manpower development through the inclusion of nutritional programme for the children. But, then an impost on kerosene directly hits at the educational capacities of those who are not blessed with electricity for domestic use. Again a higher price of kerosene is a direct hit on modernity. Now for the last few years there has been a gradual shift from primary fuels to secondary fuels for cooking purposes. And the current Budget would significantly check such a change over.

Apart from food which is of highest priority there are other essentials which should be available to the people at low price. Education has to be free at all level. And technical education to meet new demands of modern agricultural and modern living should be within the reach of any one who desire it in the rural areas. The Budget has taken no note of this.



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a great and brave
people. Their industry,
their scholarship and
their bravery command
the admiration of the world.
One hopes that they will lead
the peace movement."*

—Mahatma Gandhi

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INTERADS

DISCUSSION

Discussion on West Bengal United Front was started in Mainstream (February 14, 1970) by Prof Arun Bose. It was followed by a contribution from Prof C.R. Rathee (Mainstream, February 28). An article by Sri Satyapal Dang on "United Fronts: Pitfalls and Prospects" in the same issue, also touched on the West Bengal experiences. Two more articles "Revolution is the Issue" by K. K. Sinha and "West Bengal and Trotsky" by Dhruva Ganguly, were published in Mainstream of March 7, 1970. Two more articles are given below. All these articles were written before the recent round of the West Bengal crisis

Highly Interesting Shift

SANJAY CHOUDHURY

THE Syndicate leader Sri Atulya Ghosh, and the Politbureau member of the CPI (M), Sri Jyoti Basu were both present at a social function held in Calcutta on February 15. The host was the former Speaker of the West Bengal Assembly and a veteran Congress leader in the State, Sri Kesab Chandra Basu. Both had been invited to a wedding ceremony, and this provided a good occasion for them to exchange pleasantries.

There cannot be anything wrong for the political leader of any party in attending wedding ceremony, not even when the host happens to be the returning officer for all organisational elections held by the WBPPC(O).

As occasion like this cannot provide the mood and climate for any serious political discussions, and it was quite natural, therefore, that the Syndicate leader Sri Ghosh, and the Politbureau member Sri Basu should celebrate their chance meeting with an exchange of good wishes on personal level. But a meeting of this nature cannot be ignored altogether, specially in the present context.

For some time, people were heard talking freely about the possibility of the CPI(M) in West Bengal coming to an understanding with the Syndicate Congress because of the strained relations of the Marxist Communist Party with most of the others in the West Bengal United Front.

Asked about it, Sri Promode Das Gupta, Secretary of the West Bengal unit of the CPI(M), told newsmen recently that he had not even seen the face of Sri Atulya Ghosh so far. Newsmen present did not follow it up by pointing out that there could be an exchange of ideas even without seeing each other's face. It could be done by so many other means; but that after all is not a matter for immediate consideration.

The question, broadly speaking, is whether it is possible for the CPI(M) and the Syndicate Congress to come to an understanding on some specific issues.

Considered in the present phase of isolation of the CPI(M) in the UF, an understanding of this type cannot be straightaway dismissed as an improbability. For indirect election by the West Bengal Assembly to fill in Rajya Sabha vacancies, it becomes necessary for the CPI(M) to find an electoral ally, without any political commitment.

With the present strength of the CPI(M) and its allies in the United Front, it is hardly possible for the Marxist Communist Party to have two of its nominees elected on first preference votes. Some ten votes will have to be assured from "outside" sources, as it is extremely unlikely that the deficit can be covered by the support of any of the one or two UF parties which are positively not hostile to the CPI(M).

At any rate, a speculation about an electoral understanding cannot be totally eliminated. At the same time, political issues may be raised in discussing such a probability of the CPI(M) becoming interested in getting at least a limited support of the Syndicate Congress in West Bengal for a limited purpose.

Evidently, the latest political document of the Central Committee of the CPI(M) has been drafted not merely to give the Party's assessment of the present situation, but also to discourage any speculation about its possible line-up with either wings of the Congress.

Even then, this latest document places on record a highly interesting shift in the overall attitude of the CPI(M) towards the question of organising an alternative alliance of Left and democratic forces to replace the Congress rule at the Centre.

When the possibility of a split in the Congress was being widely discussed soon after the mid-term election in West Bengal last year, the CPI(M) refused to associate itself with any move for a united front of the Left and democratic forces on an all-India basis. The CPI(M) was unwilling even to recognise the existence of a "progressive group" within the Congress.

On the other hand, the CPI(M) continued to highlight the importance of consolidating all the democratic forces in the United Front in West Bengal and Kerala to frustrate the attacks of the Congress Government at the Centre against the Governments in the two States. This was done mainly because the CPI(M) had yet to develop its organisational strength on all-India basis, and as such, it was more interested in consolidating its position in the two UF Governments in the two States.

The CPI(M) was, thus, interested in maintaining an attitude of non-involvement in the changes taking place at the Centre. It was on this basis that the Party lent its support to Sri Giri in the Presidential election. And this continued to be the basic approach of the CPI(M) in relation

to the Indira Gandhi Government after the split.

The latest document, however, indicates a change in the Party's stand, particularly in relation to the changes taking place on the all-India level. Proceeding on the basis that one-party rule of the Congress had ceased to be a practical proposition either at the Centre or in any State, the CPI (M) believes that it will be "possible" to give a far more crushing defeat to the divided Congress if the "radical democratic parties, groups, organisations and individuals strive to unite their electoral, parliamentary and extra-parliamentary mass activities, and forge a genuine force of struggle against the landlord-bourgeois policies pursued by the Congress regime".

In other words, the CPI(M) is willing now to recognise the urgency of uniting the "democratic opposition" to inflict crushing defeats on the landlord-bourgeois policies of the Congress. This assessment has been made only after the Party suffered a setback in Kerala, and is facing political isolation in the Left and democratic camp in West Bengal.

Undoubtedly, this change in the basic political assessment has brought it closer to the slogan for a national front of democratic forces for an alternative government at the Centre. It is because of this that the CPI(M) is willing now to go even to the length of developing a "a far broader front of democratic forces, including a section of the followers of the Indira Gandhi Congress, who are earnest about the struggle against the vested interests". This has been found necessary to eliminate the serious threats to the democratic forces posed by the vested interests represented by the alliance of Syndicate, the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra.

To that extent, the Party is willing to cooperate with the Indira Government, that is, for the purpose of fighting the Syndicate alliance. But it is perhaps not unknown to the Party leadership in West Bengal that the Indira Congress in the State Assembly controls most of the Congress legislators, and has greater sympathy for the Bangla

Congress than for the CPI(M).

The CPI(M), thus, finds itself between the two fires in the West Bengal Assembly, and that is, between the line-up against it in the United Front and the unsympathetic attitude of the Indira Congress wing in the Assembly. In a situation like this, the Party's position in the coming elections to the Rajya Sabha from the State Assembly becomes extremely delicate.

Even if it avoids coming to an understanding with either of the two groups of the Congress in the Assembly, it can hardly afford to make either of them hostile. It becomes important from the Party's standpoint to give a unity call even to that section of Congress members who may prefer to call themselves progressive. It has to be seen

now to what extent the CPI(M) is willing to adjust itself for consolidating the unity of democratic forces.

What has, however, been made very clear is that the CPI(M) is extremely anxious to maintain its posture of non-alignment in reference to the two wings of the Congress. This can perhaps justify the attempts of the CPI(M) to overthrow, if possible, the Achutha Menon Ministry in Kerala.

But the real point is that this will leave the Syndicate Congress quite happy. There is nothing as yet to indicate that it will not adopt the same strategy in relation to the present confrontation in the West Bengal United Front. If possible, the CPI(M) will try to keep both the wings of the Congress happy.

Shelter For People

R. P. MULLICK

CONTRARY to the spate of speculations outside West Bengal, the United Front in West Bengal has outlived all Cassandraic prophecies about it. The latest "crisis" inducted into the political scene with mass resignations tendered by Ministers belonging to only one of the constituent parties, the Bangla Congress, has failed to raise inter-party tensions to the point of no return.

In order to understand the tenacity with which the people of West Bengal are upholding their verdict of the ballot-box—and seeing to it that, inter-party rivalries, born more out of over-emphasized zealotry to be the vanguard of an unheralded revolution than due to any inherent clash of vested class interests—one has to go back to the history of the last twenty-two years.

Without going over it in extenso, a few essentialities of the tradition of Leftism and of people's revolt against compromise with vested interests of the

bourgeoisie, may be noted.

First, the way in which political freedom was achieved by the upper sections of India's "Haves" by accepting the Partition of the country (which cost Bengal nearly two-thirds of its area, cut off more than half of its homogenous population, caused a violent rupture in the continuity of the Bengalee tradition of one united Bengal, and made the remaining populace in West Bengal desire all the more ardently for a return of "one Bengal", a variant of the anti-Partition Swadeshi spirit of 1905-1912 days), made the content of freedom suspect in the eyes of the masses.

Secondly, the continuance of India within the holy family of the Commonwealth, the personal "good" relations of the Congress Party leaders, especially of Jawaharlal Nehru, with the Mountbattens, and with the emerging neo-imperialism of Anglo-American bloc, the destruction of the INA memorial at Singapore by Mountbatten, and Nehru's

apparent acquiescence in it, continued slight of the role and memory of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, nay even diabolical attempts to ban all vestiges of respectful attitude towards his personality and the INA movement from the Army as well as from people's mind, had vitiated the general atmosphere in West Bengal souring popular attitudes towards the Centre and engendering a penchant for revolt.

Thirdly, the obvious, supremacy of finance-capitalist "lords" of the post-Independence period bringing in its wake a glaring inconsistency in the distribution of income-pattern between the Big Business, their proteges, middlemen, lackeys and associates or hangers on, on one hand, and the indigenous people of the soil on the other—the "hewers of wood and the drawers of water" as it were, who had no prospects of gain except unemployment and the marginal existence of the perpetually insecure, completed the feeling of no-confidence towards the new ruling combine.

Fourthly, the failure of land reforms brought home the truth that landlordism has not only been given a further lease of life by the ruling Congress, but in fact has been buttressed up in league with the new upstart-rich as well as the neo-zamindar class of big farmers; also the senselessly severe repressive measures with which the Tebhaga, a movement of the peasants, had been crushed in West Bengal immediately following the ushering in of freedom, unleashed in the countryside seething (although suppressed) discontent of the peasantry, especially, of the landless agriculturist and the uprooted artisan.

Fifthly, the flocking in of refugees by lakhs, the nearest kith and kin of the people, the constant reminder by their beggarly presence of the failure, or worse still, of the absence of rehabilitation measures, the hard-to-deny discrepancies in the Central Government's tackling of the problem of refugees from West Pakistan *vis-a-vis* that of refugees from the East, confirmed and crystallised the anti-Centre feelings of outraged justice, suspicion and

estrangement.

Sixthly, the continuous run of the Left-progressive movements of the workers, peasants, the near-declassed intelligentsia from the lower-middle class, and of the rising lumpen proletariat in which all the Left political parties, now forming the United Front, have laid the basis of a new social order, one that is expected to come into reality once the present decadent one is destroyed by a revolutionary upsurge.

It would hardly be necessary to detail more salient features of the people's struggles preceding the victory of the Opposition Left parties in the General Election of 1967, and thereafter in the sweeping return of UF in the mid-term re-avowal by the electorate in 1969. Suffice it to say that the last desperate bid by the monopolist-ex-landlord caucus to reverse this tradition of Left progressivism in West Bengal, and make the people to stultify their own electoral choice in 1967 through a maladroit move by ex-Governor Dharam Vira of forcing out a popular ministry, has ended in fiasco and complete disillusionment for the Centre.

Why then this internecine quarrel among erstwhile partners in a common struggle, the ever-present friction between parties that apparently have a common objective, namely, to bring to maturity the forces of social revolution and to complete its process? The reasons are inherent in the contradiction between political ideal and constitutional methodology, between means and ends, between revolutionary goal and political practice.

The well-known aphorism *strike together, march separately* has come to imbue the political rationale of the Left political parties—the mainstay of the UF—with an accent much too sharp to keep sight of reality. In fact, to declare openly the present Constitution of India as an instrument and insignia of coercion by the bourgeois class enemy of the exploited people, and then to accept Cabinet responsibility within its limitations, introduces an element of working at cross-purposes. The Third Communist Party (miscalled "Naxalite" party)

has steered clear of such innate contradiction, although its call to the people to boycott the elections, was unceremoniously rejected by the people—as evidenced in the greater exercise of suffrage by the electorate. Is it a fact, then, that the people themselves have plumped for a contradiction? The lessons of the election (mid-term) are obvious.

First, no immediate revolutionary confrontation with the State machinery of coercion (under the Centre's control), namely, the police (CRP), the Army and the para-military units;

Secondly, the immediate securing of economic benefits for the exploited workers, the dispossessed (or landless, as the case may be) peasants, and the lower-middle class employees—teachers, the State's white-collar staff, Class IV personnel, as also the swelling ranks of the unemployed and the under-employed.

Thirdly, to prepare the stepping stone for the next phase of a people's liberation movement and the forming of a Free People's Government at a later stage.

Although inarticulate and inchoate, these basic urges of the people cannot be stultified, nor ignored.

Unfortunately, the upper echelons of the present social establishment have not learnt their lesson, and continue their attempts at toppling the present UF Ministry, even though that would mean opening the floodgates to armed struggle by the dispossessed and deprived sections of the people.

The geographical contiguity of West Bengal, and of Assam to politically sensitive areas of Nagaland and Mizoram at one end, and to Nepal on the other, is obvious. This leads the Central Government to suffer the present Ministry in West Bengal as a lesser evil, and that not because of any softness, or clay-feet weakness, or passivity. It does not rule out however such possibilities of interested quarters to incite the State's Police—as was attempted in July last—or subtle wire-pullings by powerful interests with ulterior motives. The hard-headed Left leaders of the UF Cabinet

in West Bengal are astute enough to get over the stage-managed effects of such "crisis", or even of moral demonstrations of democratic virtues. The present mood and temper of the people of West Bengal will hardly let in fussy swings-about. Their choice has been made firmly, once for all, and unlike in Kerala, they are in no mood to tolerate the setting up of any Ministry, whether of a 'Mini-Front' type or of the renegades, by the backdoor.

The people are not much bothered as to who holds a particular portfolio in the Cabinet, crucial or otherwise. Just as peace loving workers have settled down to an accepted way of combined all-party efforts on harmonious basis in the sphere of trade union struggle or in movements by the lower-strata peasantry to assert and obtain the tiller's birthright against as a result of joint operation of all parties genuinely interested such movement, the general masses have come to regard

the present interregnum in the political situation in West Bengal as the best bargain possible.

Hence, the over-zealous Marxists might continue their controversy—and quarrels, violent sometimes—about who is fittest to be the vanguard of mass and class struggle in a particular locale, but the UF Ministry, as a benevolent family retreat, is likely to continue giving shelter to the people and to function as an ultimate repository of strength for all

STRUCTURAL CHANGES FOR NATIONALISED BANKS

(Continued from page 22)

banking sector and the specific financial institutions. The financial institutions are meant for financing of the projects which are viable and potentially beneficial to the national economy at their initial stages as well as in the subsequent expansionary plans, whereas commercial banks are generally averse to term-loans for maintaining liquidity. But if the functional distribution in the nationalised banking sector is made on the basis of term-banking and liquid-banking operations, an integrated approach, taking into account the functional role of the financial institutions, will be necessary.

In fact, the small industry should be given financial assistance not only after an establishment in this sector has faced initial difficulty, but for a fruitful starting of economic adventure. This will require a readjustment of activity between the nationalised banking sector and financial institutions. A demarcated line of assignment of their respective roles and a close cohesion between the two limbs of the financial body in the national economy will be required to make the objective of nationalised banking a success. The apex bank may form a close link between commercial banks, on the one hand, and cooperative banks, on the other. It may also serve as a useful link between various State financial corporations and the Small Industries Development Corporation. It may supervise the loan granted under the State Aid to Industries Act.

In the context of the changed situation the attitude of the private sector industrial and commercial establishments, non-nationalised banks, financing and investment firms and nationalised banking sector will need a coordinating authority to regulate their functions and activities and operations of each of the segments on distinctive levels avoiding overlapping functional operations in the area of integrated financial management. The existing National Credit Council can be profitably replaced by a National Council for Money and Credit to coordinate the activities of all financial agencies.

Nationalisation of banks by itself is never a panacea for all ills but merely an opportunity to serve better. Once the control over the economic lever is assured, a judicious and prudent application of the lever on the lines suggested above should lead to a new and more vigorous phase in the implementation of our avowed plans and policies.

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Some Modern Cuban Poems; Some poems by Albert Steffen; Selected poems of Parvez Shahedi; Selected poems of Subhas Mukhopadhyay, Selected poems of Agneya; Creations and Trans-creations by P Lal (Dialogue Anthologies, Calcutta, pp 16 each, Rs 2 each)

THESE small anthologies introduce poets to readers who may have neither time, patience nor money to buy full collections. They represent a comprehensive range of poetry and provide certain tones of the times. The aim is to take poetry out of esoteric circles into the reach of common readers. Quite a number of poems have an exciting air and are taken to fine pitch of feeling. There are varieties to suit every taste from love poetry of Sanskrit to the poems of the modern age symbolising the quest of man for a better future.

The modern Cuban poems are rooted in experience. They emphasize the fact that the land of socialism, supposed to be sterile in creativity by the 'free thinkers', is fertile for a poetic genius. The high sounding words like 'spirit' and 'soul' are absent, still it shows how a human world can be made beautiful without the existence of God and His emissaries on earth. When a socialistic message is conveyed, it is conveyed tenderly through the real beauty of the poem. For example, in the poem 'Can you?' by Nicolas Guillen, the fruit of the earth belongs to the humanity as a whole. It is sheer thought, making vivid the unowned beauty of Nature which brings home the message to the reader.

'The Ugly Ones' by Robert Fernandez Retamar is a poem suffused with human warmth. The hand or the immortal eye which shaped the universe into a certain pattern also made her and made

her ugly' and thus struck a discordant note in the harmony. The girl is waiting for her lover in a restaurant

*She is alone at a table
Seeing perhaps in her bowl of
soup
The shifting image of her face,
Her ugly face, that rocks
The order of the whole universe
Until arrives an ugly man
And sits at her table*

In spite of all ugliness, cruelty and terror in the world of 'Homo-Sapiens' man can fulfil himself through the warm companionship of his fellow beings.

The three 'Abed' poems by Pablo Armando Fernandez is a moving comment on the painted world devoid of reality. In such a world the broad mass of humanity is reduced to apathy, complacency and compromise and a revolutionary is left alone to suffer and strive for a better ordering of the world. But his loneliness does not symbolise the romantic 'I' wallowing in mawkish sentimentality and puerile protest, it is an assertion of the lonely drop to change the frozen river into a storm—a storm which will wash away all the weeds to its shores. The poems in the anthology speak of the unlimited potential of man's development—a development which can take place through contradiction and conflict and not by accepting Christian humanism.

Some poems by Albert Steffen—is pervaded with Christian humanism which is proffered as a panacea for all social ills. The

poet is seen musing over man's plight and ascribes his suffering to his estrangement from God. Agony is the logical concomitant to man's original sin and his consequent fall. His complaining, anger and pathos breed only woe, vengeance and death. He can obtain Grace only through penance and patience. This is what the poet would like a reader to accept after going through the anthology. The poems do not come to a human or social conclusion. The Christian message does not grow out of the experience; the attempt at places seems to be contrived. Even the 'State Funeral' a beautiful poem in many ways which brings out the hollowness of the sophisticated, solid and well-bred gentlemen who guide the fate of mankind, loses in felicity when one is suddenly confronted with problems not rooted in social reality.

Selection from Parvez Shahedi's poems is representative, translation is good and appealing. Parvez Shahedi holds a pride of place in the long tradition of progressive writing in Urdu. The progressive Urdu poetry has seen many vicissitudes ranging from a poet's love for the ideals of bourgeois democracy paying lip service to the fight for social justice to the clarion call to smash the status quo and in all this Parvez comes out boldly on the side of the suppressed. His Rubaiyat makes a bold departure from the traditional Urdu poetry demanding a poet's unstinted praise for Saqi, locks of her hair, the merry twinkle in her eyes, the flicker of smile on her lips and his request for her unlimited generosity. He asks the Saqi to change the old cups for new as

*They have burnt the bulbul's
tongue
They have stirred the garden
air, O Spring
These traders of fire have
stirred
Gunpowder on the flower beds*

The poet sings of the future when 'The iron shackles will melt and take the shape of sword' leading to the mutual destruction of the extremes. He rejects reformism as of no avail as charity destroys

those who ask and the words of kindness delude those who starve The new order will take birth not by repeating forgotten tales and fossilized dogmas but when

*The peasants have struck and
the earth has awakened
The workers have struck and
the factories are alive.*

The Rubaiyat suffers from over-repetition of word 'Saqi' which at times has a jarring effect upon the ears. In some of the quartets the word 'Saqi' occurs as many as three times. The shadow of loneliness does fall upon the poet but he rejects it in his ghazals, by sharing the sorrows of others.

In spite of his commitment to the working class ideology, the protest of Parvez Shahedi does not always rise above the traditional cry of anguish. It is Subhash Mukhopadhyay, one of the leading contemporary poets of Bengal who comes to grips with problems and raises searching questions. His commitment to the cause of the oppressed, his sense of disgust with the sentimental reformers and pontifical politicians has breathed a new life into post-Tagore Bengali poetry. In his world of poetry an individual refuses to be satisfied with sermons, homilies and mountains of pious platitudes being mouthed every day in society. In the poem 'This Land' he declares

*Having no faith
in mere pronouncements
I seek evidence*

The poet too would like to be judged by the same criterion. Fear torments the world and converts it into a land of misery. This stalking fear cannot be fought out by adopting a posture of loneliness and retreating to an ivory tower, an artist must identify himself with the suffering humanity to cry halt to the caravan of misery. In his poem 'My Task' the poet spells out his task

*I do not wish one
would call me a poet
I wish to walk
with the rank and file
shoulder to shoulder
till the end of my days*

This total identification with his suffering brethren raises his art above the level of the critical real-

ism which, in the ultimate analysis, is the revolt of the lonely 'I'.

The anthology of Agyeya's poems gives just a glimpse into the mind of one of the innovators and path-finders in the modern Hindi literature. His long poem 'The unmastered Lute' establishes the humility of the artist. The lute is a symbol of life in all its forms. Only by being conscious of the Universal Being through musing over all forms of life the hermit masters the lute. By reducing himself to zero and losing his own identity into the universal consciousness he comes to realise what harmony is there at the root of life. Truth is the same but it manifests itself in different forms to different persons. In a way it can be called an Upanishadic poem. The vitality of the poem lies in its quality of sweeping us into a trance, making us aware of a truth which, though not tangible, still gleams through the haze. The poet here takes a serious philosophical concept and reduces it to the basis of a poetic piece. His small poem 'Snake' is a beautiful piece of social satire. It is a tribute paid to the romantic idea of incorruptibility and innocence of the idyllic world.

One would wish that Agyeya would write more of such poems.

The snake appears in P. Lal's Creations and Transcreations also in his poem 'Shesh-Naga in Dum Dum'. But his poem 'The Murderer' is much more impressive. It is a poignant protest against trading in human flesh which involves calculated lust and 'love' without tenderness. Transcreations give a real glimpse into the Sanskrit poetry. The small pieces give expression to passionate love, at times erotic. In one of the poems eyes

*travel up her thighs,
Her hips, her waist, her triple
fold
where the thirsty traveller
rests
entranced*

More of such poems should be made available for the benefit of prudes who always parade themselves as the custodians of the social morality in the name of Indian culture. The Dialogue Anthologies, Calcutta has done a commendable job by bringing out these verse collections. More of such anthologies would be welcome to the lovers of poetry.

D. R. Chaudhry

UNIVERSALIST AT LARGE (Continued from page 24)

somewhat Gilbertian gesture, offered to make their own way to goal on foot. The police sub-inspector accepted this offer, and in due course the prisoners arrived" (p. 311)

Gilbertian gesture! Yes, this non-violence is quite difficult to understand. From Marx and Lenin to Stalin and Mao, the cult of violence has been exalted into a philosophy. Castro, Guevara and Debray have learnedly discussed its strategy. With or without philosophy or strategy, it is practised every day in India and elsewhere. A grey-bearded old man speaking of non-violence is out of fashion.

Equally baffling is this old man's persistent preaching against communalism. His Ahmedabad mission was like Bapu's mission in Noakhali. The victims and aggressors may have changed roles, but communal hatred and

violence was the same.

Mahatma Gandhi understood the spirit of Abdul Ghaffar 35 years ago. In a brief Foreword (dated January 14, 1935) to the small book *Two Servants of God* by Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji had this to say about Ghaffar Khan. "His was not a narrow creed. I found him to be a universalist. His politics, if he had any, were derived from his religion."

Gandhiji probably avoided the word "Humanist" in current usage because Modern Humanism is not grounded in religion. But his choice of the expression "universalist"—as always with him—is apt and fitting.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan is not merely a Muslim. To say that would be to limit his personality. Much less is he a mere Pakistani; that would limit him even more. He transcends national and religious barriers. He is truly a universalist.



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